

**Town of Chester  
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting  
Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Municipal Complex Meeting Room  
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  
Appointment: Rich Antoine, Fire Chief  
Warrant Articles  
Public Comment  
Roundtable  
Non-Public Session  
Meeting Adjournment

*1.1 Call to Order*

Stephen O. Landau, Chairman, called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:06pm.

*1.2 Roll Call*

Selectmen Present:

Joe Castricone  
Joseph Hagan, Vice Chairman  
Stephen O. Landau, Chairman  
Dick Trask

Selectman Absent:

Jack Cannon

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Rich Antoine, Fire Chief	Phil Gladu, Fire Department
Richard Bellemore, Fire Department	Richard LeBlanc, Spring Hill Farm Trustee
Gregory Bolduc, Fire Department	Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times
Ben Clark, Fire Department	Leroy Scott
Colin Costine	Jay Sweet, Spring Hill Farm
	And Other Persons Unknown to the Recording Secretary

*1.3 Pledge of Allegiance*

Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

*1.4 Additions and Deletions*

Chairman Landau reversed the order in which the New Business items on this evening’s Agenda would be addressed; to begin with Rich Antoine, Fire Chief; in a brief non-public session on employment under RSA 91:A3 II (a), and to follow with warrant articles.

*1.5 Public Comment*

Leroy Scott stood and was recognized. Mr. Scott posited that the Board only held discussions on the Fire Department in non-public session; and questioned why such appointments were not being listed on the Agenda as non-public. Chairman Landau noted it to be Chairman’s privilege to determine how items are listed on the Agenda; and per coursework, this was how subject matter specified in RSA 91:A3 II was to be handled. Mr. Scott pointed that, as an entity serving the Public, the Board ought to extend the courtesy of specifying which Agenda items would be non-public.

**II Old Business**

*2.1 Approval of Minutes*

Minutes were not discussed this evening.

**III New Business**

*3.1 Appointment: Rich Antoine, Fire Chief*

Chairman Landau made a motion to enter into non-public session under RSA 91:A3 II (a) on employment, to be finished by ~7:18pm; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved. The meeting room was closed at 7:08pm; Rich Antoine, Fire Chief and Gregory Bolduc of the Fire Department remained and appeared before the Board.

Chairman Landau made a motion to come out of non-public session; the vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to not seal the minutes of the non-public session with Mr. Antoine and Mr. Bolduc; Selectman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

The meeting room reopened and the meeting reconvened general session at 7:21pm. It was announced that minutes of this non-public session were not sealed; and that the Board accepted Mr. Antoine’s nominations for Fire Department promotions. Mr. Bolduc was chosen to serve as Deputy Chief; two (2) new Captains will be Ben Clark and Phil Gladu; and Lieutenants will be Richard Bellemore, Eric Emerson, and Buddy Menard. Promotional ceremonies are to take place in two (2) weeks, during the Selectmen’s meeting on Thursday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 at 7pm in the Meeting Room.

*3.2 Warrant Articles*

*3.2.1 Fire Department (FD)*

- *To allocate up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) of rescue transport revenue to EMS Supplies and Equipment line of the FD budget; and to place any additional rescue transport revenue in the general fund.*

Board members present quickly agreed that this item would be better addressed by means of the FD budget.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to not move forward with this warrant article; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- *To purchase two (2) LifePak 15 defibrillator units for a total of sixty-two thousand dollars (\$62,000.00); possibly expended from the CIP.*

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move this warrant article forward; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- *To lease and equip a three thousand (3,000) gallon tanker truck with minimum of one thousand gallon per minute (1,000 GPM) pump; at a cost of ~three hundred and seventy thousand dollars (~\$370,000.00), no payment due in 2017.*

Mr. Antoine, Mr. Bolduc, Ben Clark and Phil Gladu of the Fire Department appeared before the Board. Mr. Clark explained that the existing tanker was twenty-six (26) years old; and did not meet various NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) standards for safe and/or effective operation. For example, lack of an interlock feature has already allowed unintended forward/backward rolling of Tanker 1 to occur; one instance was noted in which an officer from another town was barely missed by unintended rolling of the tanker. The current five hundred gallon per minute (500 GPM) capacity has proven deficient in keeping up with hitching/large flow operations.

Chairman Landau asked if the CIP contained any such funds; Selectman Trask believed that although the CIP permitted acquisition of a tanker, it was unlikely that ample funds existed. As a means for level-funding, Chairman Landau suggested forty thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) annually be earmarked and placed in the CIP, starting this year; as CIP interest / incoming impact fees wouldn’t be enough. Chairman Landau asked of the resale/trade value of Tanker 1; Mr. Clark will determine this and report back to the Board as soon as possible.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with the purchase of a new tanker, pending how to finance it; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Selectman Trask having abstained and Selectman Cannon absent; so moved. Mr. Clark and Mr. Antoine are to report back to the Board as soon as availability of CIP funds / updated cost estimates for new tanker / estimated resale value of Tanker 1 are determined.

- *To allow additional funding of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00).*

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with this article; Selectman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- *To replace forestry truck by leasing cab and chassis with flatbed.*

Mr. Bolduc outlined a tentative plan to conserve funds by placing a new chassis on the forestry truck (which was received as a donation and will likely last a few more years) and placing its old chassis on the utility truck. Mr. Antoine did not have cost estimates on hand, but noted that a (Ford) 450 would most likely be considered. Chairman Landau estimated such would likely cost around seven thousand dollars (\$7,000.00) per year; and a package deal may be obtained if coordinated with Police Department.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to not move forward with this article; motion was not seconded.

Selectman Trask made a motion to hold this article until more expense information is available. The vote was three in favor with Selectman Castricone having abstained and Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

### *3.2.2 Governmental Buildings*

- To expend capital funds for the decommissioning and capping-off of old underground tanks at the Town Hall, as required by NH Department of Environmental Services (DES).*

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move this article forward. Vice Chairman questioned whether any funds had been appropriated for this. It was noted by Chairman Landau and Selectman Castricone that the underground tanks and associated apparatus were already in violation of code. The vote was called; Chairman Landau abstained. The vote was three in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- To obtain a utility tractor for thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000.00) or for seven thousand dollars (\$7,000.00) per year for five (5) years.*

Selectman Castricone shared cost estimates and specifications he had recently obtained, for a Commercial-use tractor in the next category up. This model features a forty-five point three (45.3) horsepower motor, side-mount mower, brush hog, loader, set of four (4) regular wheels and a set of four (4) field-use wheels. Chairman Landau noted that this tractor would be ideal for mowing and maintaining Town fields; and a part-time employee was recently hired for such. Addition of the new model would likely prolong the life of the current tractor by reducing its wear and tear. Richard LeBlanc stood and noted that such new tractor could also be utilized for some excavation work required to place utility lines at Spring Hill Farm.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with this article; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

### *3.2.3 Police Department (PD)*

- To lease and equip a new cruiser for a total of forty-nine thousand dollars (\$49,000.00).*

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with this article to obtain a cruiser for forty-nine thousand dollars (\$49,000.00); Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. Chairman Landau recommended placing a vehicle allowance line in the PD operating budget, as this expense would likely recur annually; Vice Chairman added that implementation of increased PD coverage also justified annual vehicle allowance.

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with this article for \$49,000.00, but to discuss future funding of vehicles with the Budget Committee; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Vice Chairman Hagan having abstained and Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- To lease a new four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicle for seven thousand six hundred and forty-five dollars (\$7,645.00) annually, and to equip at a one-time cost of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00).*

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with this lease at seven thousand six hundred and forty-five dollars (\$7,645.00) annually, plus the initial expense of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) to equip vehicle. Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion; Chairman Landau and Selectman Castricone both abstained. The vote was two in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- To add a new full-time police officer; contingent upon the denial of the PD’s request to allow operating budget funding of a part-time/non-benefitted detective.*

Selectman Trask made a motion to not move forward with this article, in favor of the PD budget proposal to add a part-time detective. Selectman Castricone seconded the motion; the vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

#### *3.2.4 Highway Department*

- To allow five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00) funding for improvements to roads newer than twenty (20) years old.*

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with funding, but only for whatever amount remained of last year’s roads portion of the CIP. Richard LeBlanc stood and noted that such amount was around two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00); based on this, Chairman Landau noted that taxation would be required to generate three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000.00) if funding of the full sum requested by this article is to occur. Selectman Trask withdrew his motion.

Vice Chairman Hagan made a motion to appropriate five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00) for improvements for roads as described (“newer than twenty years old”); and to investigate how much may be derived from block grants and the CIP to offset. Selectman Castricone seconded the motion as a means to allow discussion; furthering that although road improvements are necessary, this article alone accounts for ~ten percent (10%) of the grand total of warrant article funds requested. Instead, Selectman Castricone suggested consideration of funding with bond(s). Chairman Landau noted instances (prior to current Road Agent) in which great expense amounted to incomplete repairs of roads which are already falling apart again. Selectman Trask pointed that time was of the essence, due to the likelihood that oil prices and bond interest rates alike would only rise.

The vote was called on this motion; it was not carried.

- To allow one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) funding to conduct an engineering survey to determine future needs of roads older than twenty (20) years.*

Chairman Landau noted that such a survey may be less expensive to conduct, perhaps closer to sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000.00); Vice Chairman Hagan added that the Board may move forward with this article conceptually, figures subject to revision. Chairman Landau suggested the Board set a figure.

Vice Chairman Hagan made a motion to support this article with sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000.00) appropriated to determine future road needs via survey; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- *To allow four hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$425,000.00) funding to repair culverts of Edwards Mill Road, Halls Village Road, and Rod & Gun Club Road.*

Vice Chairman Hagan noted it was unlikely that the CIP held the full amount requested, therefore the balance would need to be appropriated. Selectman Trask suggested determining whether some three hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$380,000.00) may be used.

Chairman Landau made a motion to move forward with this article, using CIP funds / block grant to offset expense; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- *To add to Highway CIP / CIP.*

Selectman Trask made a motion to pass on this article until proposed dollar figures are produced; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- *To purchase a truck for one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00); possibly with CIP funds.*

As previously discussed, this proposal included the possibility of reassigning the used truck for use by the Maintenance Department. Chairman Landau did not believe that this dump truck with plow was essential for Maintenance purposes; and noted that it only had around fifty-five thousand (55,000) odometer miles.

Selectman Trask made a motion to not move forward with this article; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Vice Chairman Hagan having abstained and Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Vice Chairman Hagan departed the meeting at 8:50pm; and noted he would return momentarily.

- *To add funds to the Winter Maintenance capital reserve.*

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with this article; Selectman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Vice Chairman Hagan having stepped away and Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

### *3.2.5 Other Warrant Articles*

- *To allow Chester PACT (Public Access Cable TV) funding for equipment and services enabling online access of televised meetings.*

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward, allowing seven thousand three hundred and eighty-three dollars (\$7,383.00) funding as requested by PACT: of which three thousand nine hundred and ninety-five dollars (\$3,995.00) will provide equipment installation; one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) will

proceed general operations; and the remaining two thousand three hundred and eighty-three dollars (\$2,383.00) will offer online access of meetings. Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was two in favor with Chairman Landau having abstained, Vice Chairman Hagan having stepped away, and Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

Vice Chairman Hagan reentered the meeting at 8:53pm.

- *To allow five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) funding for the Town’s Three-Hundredth (300<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary.*

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with this article; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

- *To allow thirty-seven thousand and three hundred dollars (\$37,300.00) funding to perform repairs/replacements of sills, clapboard, insulation, etc. required to bring the house at Spring Hill Farm (SHF) up to code.*

At various times during this discussion, Richard LeBlanc, Spring Hill Farm Trustee; and Jay Sweet of Spring Hill Farm stood or appeared before the Board.

Mr. LeBlanc explained that funds appropriated last year allowed repairs to begin on the house at SHF, and the intent was to expend the remaining balance of those funds to add to those requested of this article. The exterior of the house will be the focus for repairs due to presence of lead and continued water damage. Mr. LeBlanc informed the Board that discovery of a biographical manuscript about Miss Church and SHF had inspired bringing historical preservation of SHF to a new level; plans to educate and engage the community were underway. Mr. LeBlanc felt that many townspeople simply were not aware of SHF or its offerings; and hopes that efforts of SHF Trustees and others may change that.

Mr. Sweet urged the Board to fully consider the breadth and depth of benefits Miss Church bestowed in giving the gift of SHF to the Town. Mr. Sweet opined that SHF was a prime example of what made Chester, Chester. Some four hundred (400) agricultural and wooded acres were publically available for walking, biking, equestrian, and many other pursuits. Mr. Sweet noted that preservation of agricultural history was a major focus for himself and Trustees; plans to utilize newly-acquired draft horses in nineteenth century farming and logging demonstrations were in the works. Mr. Sweet referred to the 1996 Property Tax Impact Study on the effect increasing development on the tax rate; suggesting that SHF saved and continued to save the Town a great deal of money.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with this article; Chairman Landau seconded the motion.

Selectman Trask was concerned that such funding requests were indicative of “project creep;” and questioned what SHF truly offered the Public. Selectman Trask expressed that he would like to see more promotion of Public utilization of SHF; via offering a petting zoo or sleigh rides, for example. Chairman Landau commented that such offerings would likely be seen at SHF; and also noted existence of an area of five acres upon which recreational projects are welcome. Vice Chairman Hagan strongly encouraged consideration of placing the majority of rent monies received of the SHF tenants into the general fund once charitable trust status is finalized.

Leroy Scott stood and was recognized. Mr. Scott felt that it was a shame to question Miss Church’s logic. On a different note, Mr. Scott was honored with a round of applause as Selectman Castricone announced that it was Mr. Scott’s birthday.

The vote was called on Selectman Castricone’s motion to move forward with this article; seconded by Chairman Landau: the vote was three in favor with Selectman Trask abstaining and Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

- *To increase full- and part-time wages of eligible Town Employees; striking the COLA in exchange. The intent of this measure is to close the gap between Chester’s pay rates and those of similar towns in the area. This would include augmentation of part-time Police and Fire officers’ hourly pay rate to that of full-time officers; at an estimated twenty-four thousand dollars (\$24,000.00). The bottom line salaries budget stands at three hundred and eleven thousand four hundred and twenty five dollars (\$311,425.00) with COLA; and would be two hundred and fifty five thousand six hundred and seventy-seven (\$255,677.00) pending approval of wage increase and removal of COLA.*

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with this article; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent; so moved.

- *To propose two (2) systemic alternatives to having an elected position for Road Agent, under whom a Highway Department is operated. The first option would involve contracting with an individual to fill the role of Road Agent, with operating budget provided; and the second option would involve the hiring of a qualified individual (i.e. with engineering degree) to act as Public Works Director.*

Chairman Landau explained that he had informed Mike Oleson, Road Agent, prior to announcing plans for such articles; emphasizing this was in no way a personality issue, and was strictly a means to initiate conversation and give voters a say. Mr. Oleson will serve for at least another full year, as per his term; regardless of pending outcome(s).

Selectman Castricone made a motion that Chairman Landau pursue creation of such article with the attorney; Selectman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

## **IV Selectmen’s Business**

### *4.1 Public Comment*

No members of the Public wished to comment at this time.

### *4.2 Roundtable*

Chairman Landau announced the following dates to remember:

- Per RSA 39:3-6, the last day voters may present application(s) to Selectmen to conduct special meeting(s) will be Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 [sixty (60) days prior to Town Meeting].
- Per RSA 33:8-a, the first day public hearing(s) on bond articles over one hundred thousand (\$100,000.00) dollars may be hosted will be Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 [sixty (60) days prior to



Town Meeting]. The last day to host such a hearing will be Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Seven (7) day notice of such need be provided to the Public via publication in newspaper.

Selectman Castricone announced that Thom Roy was now officially retired from the role of Building Inspector; and that Myrick Bunker was the new Building Official shared in a contract between Raymond and Chester. Updated office hours and contact information for Mr. Bunker and for administrative support staff could be viewed online.

#### *4.3 Non-Public Session*

Selectman Trask made a motion to enter non-public session, under RSA 91-A:3 II (e) pending litigation; the vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Vice Chairman Hagan reiterated the necessity that certain sensitive subject matter be conducted in non-public sessions.

The meeting room was closed at 9:52pm; with Mr. Antoine remaining.

Mr. Antoine departed the meeting at 10:10pm.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to come out of non-public session; the vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to seal the second non-public session with Mr. Antoine present, pending litigation, for an indefinite period; Selectman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

#### **V Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 7pm in the Meeting Room.

Chairman Landau made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:11pm; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:11pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caroline Rose Wilson, Recording Secretary