

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, February 4th, 2016
Municipal Complex Meeting Room
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

Call the Meeting to Order

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

Budget Meetings: Town Clerk; Tax Collector

Non-Public Session

Budget Meetings: Recreation/Wason Pond – Community Center; Wason Pond Commission/Bath House/Cottage;
Conservation; Transfer Station – Solid Waste; Patriotic, Senior Citizens, Town Fair Fireworks

Public Comment

Roundtable

Non-Public Sessions

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 7:03pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present:

Jack Cannon

Joe Castricone

Joseph Hagan, Vice Chairman

Stephen O. Landau, Chairman

Dick Trask

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Patrick Connelly, Conservation & Wason Pond

Andrew Hadik

Leslie Hammond, Recreation Commission

Bonnie Healey, Transfer Station

Chuck Heuer

Kevin Kistler, Recreation Commission Chair

Rhonda Lamphere, Budget Committee Vice Chair

Chuck Myette, Conservation & Wason Pond

Erin Newnan, Acting Town Clerk & Tax Collector

Corinna Reishus, Recreation Commission Vice Chair

Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times

Leroy Scott

Joanne Smith, Finance Director

And Other Persons Unknown to Recording Secretary

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Landau led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Additions and Deletions

Chairman Landau added non-public sessions on public employees, pending litigation, and reputation. Chairman Landau announced that the last day to submit petitions for amendment of Zoning Ordinances, Historic District Ordinances, and Building Codes was Wednesday, February 10th, 2016. Per RSA 675:4, such petitions are to be received ninety (90) days prior to Town Meeting. Town Elections will be held on Tuesday, May 10th, 2016; and Town Meeting is to begin at 9am on Saturday, May 14th, 2016 in the Multipurpose Room (MPR).

1.5 Public Comment

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

II Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

Minutes were not discussed during this meeting; Chairman Landau requested the Board read all draft minutes pending approval and prepare any notes for discussion next week.

III New Business

3.1 Budget Meetings

Present at the meeting table during all Budget Meetings was Joanne Smith, Finance Director. Rhonda Lamphere, Budget Committee Vice Chair & Town Treasurer, presented on behalf of the Budget Committee as mentioned.

3.1.1 Town Clerk

4140-1

Erin Newnan, Acting Town Clerk & Tax Collector, appeared before the Board.

Ms. Newnan explained that the requested Dog Tags line amount had increased based on actual expenditures which had exceeded the previous allowance. Other increases were in Mileage and Books & Periodicals lines; as Ms. Newnan and assistant Barbara Cannon both require various supplemental training (i.e. classes provided by the Town Clerk Association).

Ms. Newnan noted that she and Ms. Cannon often found it difficult to efficiently serve the public and/or resolve technical issues with only one phone line; when duties at hand require both ladies be on the phone. Ms. Newnan suggested re-routing a seldom used fax line (currently shared by Planning / Assessing and Building Inspection offices) to the Town Clerk / Tax Collector’s office. Ms. Newnan stated that she obtained an estimate of one hundred and sixty-five dollars (\$165.00) to perform necessary rewiring. Chairman Landau agreed this would be a reasonable solution; and remarked that there may be no charge to have existing lines moved. Ms. Newnan is to determine the cost; and if any, Ms. Smith will ask Tony Amato if the Maintenance budget may allow for such.

Selectman Castricone noted that the requested Salaries line nearly equaled the salary of the former Town Clerk; who recently retired after providing ~forty (40) years’ service. Selectman Castricone felt it questionable that anyone regardless of qualifications may run for Town Clerk; and if elected would earn an amount that another attained after decades’ dedication. Chairman Landau stated that such rate is subject to adjustment; pending discussion with whomever becomes elected in May; Selectman Trask agreed. Vice Chairman Hagan expressed that he’d rather not make this Salaries line “anemic;” sentiment mirrored by Selectman Cannon.

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with this budget proposal as-is; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion.

3.1.2 Tax Collector

4150-4

Ms. Newnan reiterated the intent to add a second telephone line to the office; thereby increasing the requested Telephone budget line. Increases in Training, Travel, and Books & Periodicals lines corresponded with Ms. Newnan’s and Ms. Cannon’s supplemental training, as above. Chairman Landau asked why the Tax Bill Preparation line had been kept level with last year’s budgeted amount; Ms. Smith noted this request to be a couple hundred dollars greater than last year’s actual amount spent, and therefore was likely a safe allowance.

Chairman Landau made a motion to move forward with this budget proposal as-is; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Ms. Newnan departed the meeting at 7:18pm.

Non-Public Session

Selectman Cannon made a motion to conduct a brief non-public session on compensation, under RSA 91A:3 II (a); Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

At 7:19pm, the meeting room was closed; all attendees departed except members of the Board.

Selectman Cannon made a motion that the Board come out of non-public session; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Selectman Cannon made a motion to seal the minutes of this non-public session on compensation for an indefinite period; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Selectman Castricone departed the meeting room at 7:22pm.

The meeting room was reopened at 7:23pm; Ms. Smith rejoined the meeting table to continue with Budget Reviews.

3.1.3 Recreation

4520-1

Members of the Recreation Commission (RC) appeared before the Board: Leslie Hammond; Kevin Kistler, Chair; Corinna Reishus, Vice Chair; and Michelle Trask.

The Recreation budget’s largest requested increase was in the Salaries line: Ms. Hammond explained that offering so many programs required additional staff coverage; preferably via a full-time, salaried role serving as a management base. Ms. Smith explained that two versions of the Recreation budget proposal were provided for review: one requesting a twenty-two thousand and twenty-eight dollar (\$22,028.00) Salaries line; the other adjusted with requested full-time wage of thirty-one thousand and forty-two dollars (\$31,042.00) in Salaries. Ms. Lamphere stood and noted she hadn’t received such documents; Ms. Smith reiterated the approximate ten thousand dollars’ (\$10,000.00) difference in the proposals.

Ms. Reishus explained the Supplies & Equipment line’s increase reflected necessary replenishment of first aid supplies; and that this line also funded the high volume of background checks required of coaches for participation. The Athletic Fields line increased relative to the estimate received of TruGreen for upcoming lawn services to be performed at Nichols and French fields.

Selectman Castricone re-entered the meeting at 7:31pm.

Selectman Cannon suggested that the Recreation Commission implement a self-funding expenditure structure; by offsetting Salaries with program fees received. Ms. Smith noted that summer staff wages are funded this way; and she intended to further research enacting this. Ms. Lamphere reported that the RC’s revolving account balance as of January 31st was fifty-seven thousand five hundred and twenty-one dollars and sixty seven cents (\$57,521.67). Chairman Landau suggested that the ~ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) requested for Salaries be pulled from such account; Ms. Reishus and Ms. Hammond responded with uncertainty, having been cautioned previously of the legalities of fund use and allocations. Chairman Landau wondered from whence such caution had been derived. Ms. Lamphere stood and clarified the process in which fees are collected, deposited, reconciled, and distributed accordingly. Ms. Reishus acknowledged that she was aware of this; and mentioned that the RC had always charged the lowest fees possible as they are not-for-profit. Mr. Kistler added that no children are denied participation due to inability to pay.

Selectman Trask asked of Multipurpose Room (MPR) rent monies: Ms. Reishus stated that these went to the Town rather than the RC account; but Ms. Smith noted never having received these via Blue Sombrero. Selectman Castricone mentioned that it was his understanding that someone rented the MPR this year at fifty dollars (\$50.00) per hour, and had given the amount due to Sharon DeLuca, Recreation Coordinator. Per Chairman Landau’s suggestion, Ms. Smith is to rework this budget to reflect the requested full-time Salaries line including benefits, to derive the ~ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) from the RC’s revolving account.

Vice Chairman Hagan made a motion to approve this budget proposal to include funding for the full-time position, including benefits as deemed necessary by the individual to be hired; and that no less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) will be derived from the revolving account. Selectman Cannon seconded the motion; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Selectman Cannon requested that background screening have a designated budget line, rather than be included with the Supplies & Equipment line. Ms. Smith agreed to modify accordingly with terminology to mirror that of similar budgets.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with the modifications noted; Selectman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

3.1.4 Wason Pond Recreation / Community Center 4530-1

Ms. Hammond explained that all funding requests remained level, with the exception of the request to designate a line for the Wason Pond Fishing Derby—with an eight hundred dollar (\$800.00) allowance. Ms. Smith questioned this, as last year’s total WPC budget was less, yet still allowed funding for the Derby. It was noted that the WPC wishes to provide transparency by declaring expenditures of the annual event, which provides children the opportunity to fish without a license on the last day before licenses are required; typically the first Saturday in June. Selectman Cannon suggested the Fishing Derby line’s requested funding amount be changed to one dollar (\$1.00); Ms. Smith agreed to make this adjustment, and that she intends to research how the Derby was funded in the past.

Chairman Landau questioned the jump in Portable Toilets request; from eight hundred and nineteen dollars (\$819.00) spent in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014/2015, to current request of one thousand nine hundred dollars (\$1,900.00). Ms. Trask cited the addition of a unit and the extension of units’ usage to cover soccer season. Chairman Landau felt that long-term planning was seriously needed; Selectman Trask agreed that septic options be researched.

Selectman Trask made a motion that the eight hundred dollar (\$800.00) request in the Fishing Derby line be adjusted to one dollar (\$1.00); Vice Chairman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with this budget with changes discussed; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Ms. Hammond, Mr. Kistler, Ms. Reishus, and Ms. Trask departed the meeting at 7:58pm.

3.1.5 Wason Pond Commission (WPC)/Bath House/Cottage 4541-1, 4540-1, 4535-1

Appearing before the Board were Chuck Myette, Conservation Commission Chair & Wason Pond Commission member; and Patrick Connelly, Conservation Commission Treasurer & Wason Pond Commission Acting Chair.

It was noted that no requests had increased within this budget. Selectman Castricone asked why so little of the Miscellaneous line had been spent YTD (year-to-date); Mr. Connelly remarked that the balance would be used to provide refreshments for volunteers in an upcoming Spring clean-up.

Selectman Cannon asked of the decommissioning of utilities at the Caretaker Cottage; it was noted that this process was moving along. Selectman Trask suggested bringing in laborers via the Rockingham County Jail work program to perform various maintenance and repairs; and noted previously this program provided Wason Pond beach raking, brush trimming, etc. Mr. Myette agreed this was a great idea, noting an old well head needing removal; and stating that a to-do list would be compiled.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with the Wason Pond Commission, Bath House, and Caretaker Cottage budget proposals; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion.

Chairman Landau questioned the status of septic easement; Mr. Myette confirmed that in-kind septic options existed, and that the possibility of creating bathrooms under the barn was being explored. Chairman Landau suggested that the Board solicit engineering consultants to develop a long-term plan, and discontinue costly portable toilets. The Board unanimously agreed to move forward with this.

Chairman Landau called the vote of Selectman Castricone’s prior motion to move forward with the Wason Pond Commission, Bath House, and Caretaker Cottage budget proposals; which Vice Chairman Hagan had seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

3.1.6 Conservation 4619-1

Selectman Castricone questioned the Conservation budget Miscellaneous line request; Mr. Myette stated that the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) had been carried in case complaints need be addressed with legal or consultant services.

Chairman Landau made a motion to move forward with the Conservation budget proposal as-is; Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Mr. Connelly and Mr. Myette departed the meeting at 8:07pm.

3.1.7 Transfer Station – Solid Waste

4324-1

Bonnie Healey of the Transfer Station appeared before the Board; accompanied by Andrew Hadik.

Detailed commodities reports factoring data by weeks, weights, price per ton, rebates, etc. were briefed by Mr. Hadik. Although the Transport and Tipping line had been over-budgeted in prior years; projections for FY 2016/2017, increased hauling rates and consideration of year-to-date expenses justified leveled request of sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$67,000.00).

Selectman Castricone questioned the increased Facility Maintenance line; an attached estimate for parking lot repairs was cited. Selectman Castricone reminded that the Bid and Purchase Policy required at least one more bid be obtained, as the project was expected to cost over five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00); Mr. Hadik agreed to obtain another bid. Selectman Castricone asked of the need to replace tires for the golf cart; Ms. Healey explained that they had acquired the golf cart as used, and that it still had its original tires which were extremely worn. Mr. Hadik mentioned that Lloyd Healey of the Transfer Station was to thank for maximizing the performance and life of the facility’s equipment thus minimizing expenses; Mr. Healey has taken such great care of a compactor that it has lasted nineteen (19) years--at least ten years longer than its estimated life.

Selectman Cannon wondered whether tires could be placed in the compactor, rather than paying for their removal. Ms. Healey explained that the tires’ weight would increase expense; and Mr. Hadik noted that such was prohibited in 1997. Selectman Cannon suggested increasing tire disposal fees; Mr. Hadik agreed and intends to return to the Board with a suggested tire fee increase amount. Selectman Castricone asked about revenue; Mr. Hadik pointed to a document which indicated whether recyclable materials had resulted in profits or costs by ton annually. Mr. Hadik noted that the recycling program had saved a net amount of twenty-six thousand dollars (\$26,000) last year.

Chairman Landau made a motion to move the Transfer Station budget forward; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved. Ms. Healey and Mr. Hadik departed the meeting at 8:23pm.

3.1.8 Patriotic, Senior Citizens, Town Fair Fireworks

4583-1, 4586-1, 4587-1

Ms. Smith remarked that she kept the Patriotic budget request level with the current budget amount; as only sixty (\$60.00) had been spent YTD. Chairman Landau explained that Patriotic line expenditures included large flags (except for cemeteries, separately funded) and arrangements for parades, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, etc.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with the Patriotic budget proposal; Selectman Trask seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Chairman Landau noted that the Senior Citizens budget had remained at ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) for two to three (2-3) years; remarking that these funds were reliably expended true to the allotted amount.

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with the Senior Citizens budget proposal; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Chairman Landau expressed his approval of the Town Fair Fireworks budget request, level since 2012; positing that the community spirit that resulted was well worth seven thousand dollars (\$7,000.00). Selectman Castricone mentioned it was his understanding that some Fair attendees made donations to exclusively benefit the fireworks display. Ms. Lamphere asked where these donations go; Selectman Castricone believed into a “boot.” Chairman

Landau stressed the necessity of accounting for these monies; as no one seemed to know what was done with the donations after being placed in the boot. Selectman Cannon posed that collection of donations this way should be discouraged, or even prohibited. Ms. Lamphere felt that since Town Fair revenue goes to Recreation, expenses ought to be labeled.

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with the Fireworks budget proposal; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Ms. Smith reminded the Board that a twenty thousand dollar (\$20,000.00) operating budget had been proposed for Spring Hill Farm (SHF); and asked the Board how they wished to proceed. Selectman Trask referred to the Minutes of the January 7th, 2016 BOS meeting; which indicated the funding be left out; SHF Trustees to appear before the board to explain the request. Selectman Castricone questioned the legality of funding a trust--Chairman Landau clarified that the Farm itself is Town-owned and is a separate entity from the trust; therefore any subsequent Town funding must be approved and designated by the Board for agricultural purposes only. Ms. Smith noted the possibility that the SHF Trustees had not yet been asked to appear before the Board.

Ms. Smith mentioned that approval of the proposed Building Inspection budget had been pending adjustment to be deferred to tonight’s meeting. It was agreed that Selectman Trask and Ms. Smith would meet for discussion this week.

Ms. Smith departed the meeting at 8:43pm.

IV Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Public Comment

Chuck Heuer stood and was recognized by the Board. Mr. Heuer explained that his home’s significant setback from the road had inhibited cable installation required to view televised BOS meetings. Last week, the Board discussed PACT’s proposal to the Board to approve funding necessary to offer Chester Cable programs online, via upload and/or streaming. Mr. Heuer urged the Board to consider free or low-cost alternatives; and volunteered his efforts if such is pursued. Mr. Heuer pointed that his tax dollars funded educational expenses, which his own children had not utilized in at least ten years; therefore invalidating the rationale that resources not used by all citizens were unworthy expenditures.

Although agreeing that the end product would be a great offering; Selectman Trask opined that genuine community interest expressed in the spirit of volunteerism would be critical for success. In that funds had already been expended to enable the Station to go digital; Selectman Cannon felt it would be reasonable to maximize its digital capabilities. Selectman Castricone reminded the Board that the estimated cost to provide live streaming was two thousand three hundred dollars (\$2,300.00); and offering playback would cost another \$2,300.00. Chairman Landau proposed placing an additional \$2,300.00 in the PACT line; which would cost about a dollar fifty (\$1.50) annually per Chester household.

Ms. Lamphere did not feel it was necessary to budget for this; and a moment later clarified that PACT did not even have a budget. The logistics of funding and complexity of franchise fees, taxation, and requirements as per the Comcast contract were mentioned; and the Board concluded that a warrant article would be required to expend such funds.

Mr. Heuer departed the meeting at 9:02pm.

4.2 Roundtable

Chairman Landau offered opportunity to discuss a list of proposed warrant articles; no members of the Board wished to do so at this time. Chairman Landau announced that the Planning Board is to hold a public hearing on Wednesday, February 24th, 2016 at 7:45pm in the Meeting Room: A request has been made by Eversource to trim bushes and remove trees on Hanson Road; which is a Designated Scenic Road per RSA 231:157. Related documents are available for viewing at the Chester Municipal Complex, 84 Chester Street; in the Town Clerk’s office or the Board of Selectmen’s office.

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4.3 Non-Public Sessions

Chairman Landau made a motion to conduct non-public sessions under RSA 91A:3 II (a) pending litigation and (c) reputation. Selectman Castricone seconded the motion; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

The meeting room was closed at 9:06pm.

The meeting room was reopened at 9:31pm.

Chairman Landau made a motion that the Board come out of non-public session; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Chairman Landau made a motion that the Board seal the first non-public session, on reputation, for a period of six (6) months; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Chairman Landau made a motion that the Board seal the second non-public session, pending litigation, for an indefinite period; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

Chairman Landau made a motion that the Board seal the third non-public session, pending litigation, for an indefinite period; the vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

V Adjournment

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, February 11th, 2016 at 7pm in the Meeting Room.

Chairman Landau made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:32pm. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative, so moved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caroline Rose Wilson, Recording Secretary