

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen’s Meeting
Thursday, January 28th, 2016
Municipal Complex Meeting Room
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

Call the Meeting to Order

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman’s Additions or Deletions

Fire Department: PPE Funding

Budget Meetings: Assessing, Planning Board, ZBA, Building Inspection,

Highway, Street Lighting, Governmental Buildings, Stevens Hall

Roundtable

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 7:05pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen Present:

Joe Castricone

Joseph Hagan, Vice Chairman – *departed at 9:14pm*

Stephen O. Landau, Chairman

Dick Trask

Selectman Absent:

Jack Cannon

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Tony Amato, Maintenance Supervisor

Rich Antoine, Fire Chief

Greg Bolduc, Fire Captain

Ben Clark, Fire Lieutenant

Andrew Hadik, Planning Board Coordinator

Andy Higham

Rhonda Lamphere, Town Treasurer

Mike Oleson, Road Agent

Liz Richter

Matt Rittenhouse, Tri-Town Times

Leroy Scott

Joanne Smith, Finance Director

Mike Weider, Budget Committee Chairman

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 added that approval of a convenience fee for online permitting be addressed; and Selectman Castricone requested a Chester Public Access Cable TV (PACT) item be discussed.

1.5 Public Comment

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

II Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

With the intent to discuss minutes during next week’s BOS meeting, Chairman Landau requested the members of the Board read all draft minutes pending approval.

2.2 Fire Department: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Funding

Rich Antoine, Fire Chief; Greg Bolduc, Fire Captain; and Ben Clark, Fire Lieutenant appeared before the Board.

Mr. Clark, who manages the Department’s gear, had addressed the Selectmen in a letter; which Chairman Landau shared. The necessity to discontinue expired PPE and the request for funding to enable and sustain periodic replacement of gear was highlighted. NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) standards mandate all PPE ten (10) years and older, regardless of usage, be discarded to limit exposure to carcinogens. Thirteen (13) expired sets of gear plus one (1) set due to expire need to be replaced. Fire-exposed gear must be disassembled, washed, and hang-dried; a twenty-four (24) hour minimum process. Mr. Clark reported that many officers have chosen to forego washing gear for six (6) months to one (1) year at a time to remain available for duty, as little to no back-up gear is available. Instances were noted in which PPE non-compliance had restricted participation in Fire Academy training. A strategy to purchase seven (7) new sets of bunker gear and accessories per year was proposed to optimize safety, encourage operational efficiency, and to create gear reserves.

A set of bunker gear includes a jacket and a pair of pants; and on average costs two thousand to two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,000.00-\$2,500.00). Helmet, hood, gloves, and boots are purchased at additional expense and are needed to properly outfit a fire fighter head-to-toe. Currently the Department obtains the least expensive gear available, averaging one thousand seven hundred dollars (\$1,700.00) per set. Mr. Clark explained that such gear is adequate at best; and that the better gear provides flexibility and fit essential for optimal performance.

The current PPE budget request is for twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000.00); which would allow the purchase of approximately six (6) sets of gear in FY 2016/2017. Chairman Landau suggested that a Warrant Article request provision of eight (8) more sets; so that fourteen (14) total be obtained as required.

Vice Chairman Hagan agreed, and suggested that ten (10) sets of gear per year thereafter would more effectively create the desired replenishment cycle.

Mike Weider, Budget Committee Chairman, challenged the particular NFPA standards being upheld; pointing that only certain tiers of service may be performed by this Department. Mr. Weider emphasized the necessity of developing a long-term plan based on standards and true-cost analysis.

Chairman Landau made a motion that the Board consider addressing a twenty-thousand dollar (\$20,000.00) Warrant Article to the Budget Committee; to replace eight (8) sets of fire gear in addition to the six (6) sets allowed by PPE budget line. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Mr. Antoine, Mr. Bolduc, and Mr. Clark departed the meeting table at 7:36pm.

III New Business

3.1 Budget Meetings

3.1.1 Assessing 4152

Jean Packard, Assistant Assessor, appeared before the Board.

Ms. Packard explained that the Utility Appraiser line request rose from six thousand dollars (\$6,000.00) to eight thousand four hundred dollars (\$8,400.00) due to increased contract fee for services rendered by George Sansoucy. Ms. Packard noted that such rate represented the annual fee as within a five-year contract; and could be significantly higher on a year-to-year basis.

As lawsuits involving certain utility companies have yet to yield results; Chairman Landau expressed concern over contract increase and questioned whether other utility appraisers existed locally. Ms. Packard responded that Mr. Sansoucy was the only utility appraiser she knew of; and informed the Board that contract renegotiation was possible as long as funding had not yet occurred. Ms. Packard agreed to obtain a quote for services provided year-to-year, as requested by Chairman Landau.

Ms. Packard attributed the sharp drop in the Revaluation line to the use of capital reserve funding for this year’s revaluation services, provided by Municipal Resources Incorporated (MRI). The FY 2016/2017 Revaluation line request is one dollar (\$1.00); 99.94% less than last year’s one thousand eight hundred dollar (\$1,800.00) allowance.

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

Ms. Packard departed the meeting table at 7:51pm.

3.1.2 Planning Board (PB) 4191

Andrew Hadik, Planning Board Coordinator; Liz Richter, Planning Board Member; and Mike Weider, Planning Board Member appeared before the Board.

Chairman Landau questioned the two hundred and twenty-five dollar (\$225.00) Office Equipment request; Mr. Hadik explained the need to replace the color printer was anticipated. Chairman Landau requested that the amount be placed in the IT budget under Planning Board; Ms. Smith to adjust accordingly.

Selectman Castricone questioned the Postage increase; Mr. Hadik explained that the existence of many subdivisions created the need to issue correspondence to abutters via Certified Mail. Increase in the Telephone request line was clarified to be inclusive of fax and internet services.

Chairman Landau asked of the Travel expense increase; Mr. Hadik’s regular attendance of seminars and training events was noted.

Vice Chairman Hagan inquired of the Coordinator’s salary increase; Ms. Richter and Mr. Weider each expressed satisfaction and noted that fees gathered since had more than justified the salary adjustment.

Mr. Hadik introduced a proposal to engage Southern NH Planning Commission (SNHPC) in annual procurement of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The objective as stated by Planning Board members present is to maximize accuracy, manageability, and legal defensibility of the CIP by maintaining it as a “living document.” It was requested that this become a steady budget line item, at a current annual estimate of over two thousand four hundred dollars (\$2,400.00).

Selectman Castricone expressed it was his understanding that a Part Time Planner was allowed for; then was noted as unnecessary. Mr. Hadik clarified that such allocation was not in relation to the CIP or impact fees. Ms. Smith verified that her record showed that no Part Time Planner had been funded for either FY 2013/2014 or 2014/2015.

Chairman Landau and Vice Chairman Hagan both agreed this to be a worthy expense; noting its potential to create short- and long-term improvements within the town and in relation to maximum returns.

Mr. Hadik questioned the PB Recording Secretary line, relative to its placement within the PB budget, and to the source of its actual funding; Ms. Smith intends to compile a report to clarify this allocation.

Selectman Trask made a motion to move forward with this budget, including the addition of two thousand five hundred dollars to engage annual edition of the CIP.

Chairman Landau named a figure of seventy three thousand eight hundred and twenty nine dollars (\$73,829.00) as the adjusted PB budget request including the additional \$2,500.

Selectman Trask withdrew his previous motion.

Selectman Trask made a motion to subtract the two hundred and twenty five dollars (\$225.00) from the PB Office Equipment line; and to add the \$2,500.00 for the annual edition of the CIP. The vote was three in favor; with Selectman Castricone abstaining, and with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Mr. Hadik, Ms. Richter and Mr. Weider departed the meeting table at 8:15pm.

3.1.3 Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) 4193

Vice Chairman Hagan noted that the Administrative Assistant Salary line increased by one thousand one hundred and forty nine dollars (\$1,149.00); there was no discussion, as all other budget lines remained level.

Vice Chairman Hagan made a motion to approve the requested ZBA budget for FY 2016/2017; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

3.1.4 Building Inspection (BI) 4240

Chairman Landau questioned the decrease in this budget; Ms. Smith remarked that she had kept it the same (in consideration of transition to shared/part-time Inspector). Chairman Landau requested that Ms. Smith adjust this budget to reflect forty to fifty (40-50) total BI Salary hours per week; in anticipation of possible addition of BI staff.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to defer review of this budget to next week’s BOS meeting. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

3.1.5 Highway 4312

Mike Oleson, Road Agent, appeared before the Board.

Chairman Landau commented that the Highway budget decreased overall; Mr. Oleson explained that he adjusted the Gas & Oil line in response to lower fuel costs. Mr. Oleson described the request to be that of a “maintenance budget.”

Selectman Castricone asked if Electricity costs were factored as per recent rate reductions; Selectman Trask noted that billing has been held up due to processing issues, therefore more has been spent year-to-date than indicated on the request summary.

Vice Chairman Hagan questioned Asphalt costs left level; Mr. Oleson noted that although aggregate and sand prices had increased, the price of oil for transport had decreased—so overall asphalt has only gone down by one dollar (\$1.00).

Selectman Castricone began to make a motion to move this budget forward; Mr. Weider interjected with his opposition of certain instances in which the term “flat” had been used to describe aspects of this budget, which he observed to have increased.

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

Mr. Oleson outlined the warrant articles he intends to bring forth this May for vote at Town Elections. The first entails performing crack filling on roads which are twenty (20) or fewer years old; at a proposed total cost of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00).

Next, Mr. Oleson explained his plan to enlist an engineering firm to perform an impartial needs assessment and repair cost estimate for roads older than twenty years of age; which would cost an approximate one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00).

Third, Mr. Oleson intends to address the recurrent Edwards Mill Road culvert issue; which, per Scott of Dubois and King, will cause road closure if not addressed.

Last, Mr. Oleson noted the deterioration of Cole Road culverts. Mr. Oleson, whose examination of this issue has barely begun, provided a very rough cost estimate of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000.00).

Additionally, Mr. Oleson mentioned his anticipation of the need to replace a truck purchased in 2012.

Mr. Oleson departed the meeting table at 8:30pm.

3.1.6 Street Lighting 4316

250 The Street Lighting budget request remained level with last year’s budgeted allowance of four thousand
dollars (\$4,000.00). It was noted that this budget funds the blinking light at Town Center and the
252 flashing 20 MPH School Zone sign on Raymond Road; even though these are State roads.

254 Chairman Landau inquired if any savings had been achieved via recent savings program; Selectman
Trask affirmed that thirteen percent (13%) savings were seen thus far. Ms. Smith suggested leaving
256 this budget request as-is.

258 Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with the proposed Street Lighting budget; the
vote was three in favor with Chairman Landau having abstained and with Selectman Cannon absent, so
260 moved.

262 *3.1.7 Governmental Buildings 4194-1*

264 Tony Amato, Maintenance Supervisor, appeared before the Board.

266 Mr. Amato stated that he had consulted with Ms. Smith in the spirit of proposing a lower budget, as
recently reviewed departments had been able, due to lower energy costs. Indeed, Mr. Amato cited that
268 the Telephone, Propane, and Gas/Oil/Diesel lines were successfully reduced in comparison with last
year’s budget.

270 Chairman Landau asked of the Major Projects line, which had increased from fifty thousand dollars
272 (\$50,000.00) budgeted last year, to seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000.00) requested for FY 2016/2017.
Mr. Amato stated that this figure included chimney repair and roof repair for the back section of the
274 Municipal Complex.

276 Chairman Landau noted that asbestos was known to exist throughout the back section of the Complex;
which formerly comprised the Junior High wing of Chester Elementary School. Currently housing the
278 Clothes Closet, a yoga room, Police gym, and Police evidence storage; Chairman Landau opined that
budget-funded repair of this wing take a backseat to a reassessment and development of a long-term
280 plan of use. The possibility of requesting capital funding for repairs as addressed in a warrant article
was mentioned.

282 Mr. Weider posited that a long-term plan be devised if capital funding is requested to pay for such costly
endeavors. Mr. Weider suggested utilization of a 7-year bond through which funding may be obtained
284 annually over the term. Ms. Lamphere questioned such logic; Mr. Weider responded that anticipated
accumulation of impact fees and interest could provide basis for a methodology of funding and executing
286 large, long-term projects as proposed. Selectman Trask furthered that such could ensure availability of
funds and allow for earmarking.
288

290 Mr. Amato commented upon additional request increases; such as the increase in the Chester Kitchen
Repair and Maintenance line justifiable by revenue received from processors. Mr. Amato noted the
292 request made by Police Chief Berube to enlist a locksmith for security overhaul as well.

294 Mr. Amato stated that the Spring Hill Farm (SHF) Maintenance line increased to allow electricity to be
installed within the outbuildings. Mr. Weider and Ms. Lamphere, respectively, challenged this: aside
296 from the actual necessity of allowing SHF funding, it was expressed that a rift existed between the
idealism and original purpose of SHF, and the current realities of its management and fiscal structure.
298 Ms. Lamphere urged the Board to implement a reassessment of SHF; and Mr. Weider expressed his
sentiment that past allowances resulted in incomplete projects requiring even more funds.

Chairman Landau made a motion that the Governmental Buildings budget request be set at two hundred eighty-eight thousand, one hundred and thirty-five dollars (\$288,135.00); Ms. Smith to adjust Major Projects line to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00), and bring SHF Maintenance line to three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00); Vice Chairman Hagan seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Selectman Trask having abstained and with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

3.1.8 Stevens Hall 4194-2

No discussion occurred as the Stevens Hall budget request remained level to last year’s budgeted amount.

Selectman Castricone made a motion to move forward with the Stevens Hall budget as requested; the vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Mr. Amato, Ms. Lamphere, and Mr. Weider departed the meeting at 9:10pm.

IV Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Chairman Landau reminded the Board that implementation of a five dollar (\$5.00) Convenience Fee be approved to move forward with enabling Building and Trade permits be offered online, as “ePermits.”

Vice Chairman Hagan made a motion that a five dollar (\$5.00) Convenience Fee be applied to ePermits; the vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Chairman Landau noted receipt of a letter requesting to build on a Class VI Road. Chairman Landau made a motion to not authorize building on a Class VI Road; Selectman Castricone seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Cannon absent, so moved.

Earlier in the meeting, Chairman Landau made mention of a letter received of Sweeney & Sweeney, on behalf of Red Link Holding, LLC; in which one hundred and fifteen thousand dollars (\$115,000.00) was offered for the purchase of some fifty (50) acres on Candia Road—lot number 011-059-000. Chairman Landau opined that such offer was beyond low; his sentiment was mirrored by fellow Selectmen present.

Vice Chairman Hagan departed the meeting at 9:14pm; and Ms. Smith departed the meeting at 9:15pm.

Selectman Castricone explained that he had agreed to present a proposal to the Board on behalf of PACT; that allowance of funds be budgeted as a means of acquiring online streaming capabilities. This would also entail replacement of the server; as a consultant deemed the current server unsuitable for such applications.

Selectman Trask felt that live streaming expenditures would be unjustifiable at this point; and suggested offering videos for upload. Being unfamiliar with the technology and wary of allowing expenses for non-essential services, Chairman Landau abstained totally.

Selectman Castricone also noted that PACT volunteers had recently installed two (2) new speakers in the back of the meeting room.

350 Selectman Trask questioned how and when to introduce a certain individual to the Board and to Building
352 Officials; as a candidate for a part-time supplemental Building and Code Enforcement Official. The ideal
354 candidate will focus on Code Enforcement; but will serve as an Assistant or Deputy to the newly-
356 appointed, Part-Time Building Inspector being shared by Raymond and Chester. Selectman Trask stated
358 that he had informed Mr. Bunker prior of the likelihood that additional staff would be added; to which
Mr. Bunker responded agreeably. Selectman Castricone felt it essential for the new person to work well
with Mr. Bunker; but also with Planning Board and ZBA members. Chairman Landau felt that Mr. Bunker
should familiarize himself with the role and then be given the opportunity to express whether he’d prefer
an Assistant or a Deputy, for example.

360 It was agreed that Selectman Trask will invite the candidate in for initial introduction.

362 **V Adjournment**

364 The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, February 4th, 2016 at 7pm in the
Meeting Room.

366 Chairman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25pm. The vote was three in favor with Selectman
368 Cannon and Vice Chairman Hagan absent, so moved.

370 The meeting was adjourned at 9:25pm.

372 Respectfully Submitted,

374 Caroline Rose Wilson, Recording Secretary