

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, April 12th, 2018
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

Call the Meeting to Order
Roll Call
Pledge of Allegiance
Additions and Deletions
Public Comment
Approval of Minutes
Items for Signature
Public Hearing – Road Acceptance
Inventory Forms Discontinuation
Crowley Woods Warrant Article
Spring Hill Farm High Tunnel
Roundtable
Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Trask called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:32pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Cass Buckley
Jack Cannon
Jeremy Owens (arrived at 7:41pm)
Dick Trask (arrived at 7:32pm)

Selectmen absent:

Steve D'Angelo

Members of the Public present, at various times:

George Abdallah
Michael Babin
Aaron Berube, Police Chief
Greg Bolduc, Fire Chief
Andrew Hadik, Planning Coordinator
Timothy Huff
Rhonda Lamphere
Richard LeBlanc
Chuck Myette
Nancy Myette
Michael Oleson, Road Agent
Jim Ricker
Julia Webb
Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times

And other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Trask led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman's Additions and Deletions

Selectman Buckley would like to discuss the High Tunnel at Spring Hill Farm.

1.5 Public Comments

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:33pm.

II. Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

An approval sheet for the previous week's meeting minutes is in the signature folder.

2.2 Items for Signature

Chairman Trask urged all members to review and sign items in the Signature Folder.

III. New Business

3.1 Public Hearing – Road Acceptance

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved to open the Public Hearing on Road Acceptance; Selectman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Selectman Owens yet to arrive and Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:34pm.

Chairman Trask announced that the three roads being discussed tonight were Shetland Road, Hackney Drive, and Isaac Foss Road. The Planning Board made their recommendations at their meeting of March 28th, 2018.

Insofar as Hackney and Shetland are concerned, the Planning Board recommended their approval with these two conditions:

- Guardrails must be installed, and
- Proof that all Dubois & King invoices have been paid must be received.

The roads were built to Town standards, and as-builts have been received and approved. All certifications have been done. Since that Planning Board meeting, the guardrails have been installed. Road Agent Oleson stated that he has visited these roads, and after requesting and receiving a few changes from the developers, he approves of their acceptance.

Vice-Chairman Cannon asked why a debt to Dubois & King would be a condition for the Town; Planning Coordinator Hadik replied that it has always been a practice that the Town's Engineer be paid. Mr. Babin, the builder of Shetland and Hackney Roads, stated that no invoice has been received from Dubois & King as of yet.

Selectman Buckley moved that Hackney Drive and Shetland Road be accepted as Town Roads, conditional upon proof of payment to Dubois & King being received; Vice-Chairman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

Insofar as Isaac Foss is concerned, the Planning Board recommended its approval.

Road Agent Oleson stated that he has visited this road, and noticed some severe gouging. The Engineer did not believe that this was a problem, but Road Agent Oleson would like it on record. He also would like the road swept, and that this be a criteria for future road acceptances; Mr. Abdallah, builder of Isaac Foss, stated that it would be done tomorrow or Monday.

Timothy Huff, a resident of Isaac Foss Road, stood and was recognized. He stated that there are some driveway seams on the road that are beginning to deteriorate, and provided the Selectmen with photographs. Chairman Trask asked Road Agent Oleson if he had seen these driveways seams; he has. Road Agent Oleson stated that he prefers cold planed seams, and that these were only butted. He added that the development on Isaac Foss Road predates the Town requiring a maintenance bond. He added that Isaac Foss has been a private road for approximately three years. Selectman Buckley added that the intent always was to leave Isaac Foss private, and yet now the Town was being asked to accept it.

George Abdallah stood and was recognized. He stated that he built Isaac Foss to Town specs, and that Cooper, the paver, tacked the driveways and roads together in order that water could not permeate. He added that the seams are in the Town's right of way, and that Dubois & King has inspected them several times. He concluded by saying that the plows never go near the seams, as they are 12' up the driveways.

The Selectmen suggested that a visit be paid to Isaac Foss Road to look at these seams before the road is accepted. Road Agent Oleson will arrange this with Dubois & King, and notify the Selectmen's Office so that any available Selectman may attend. BOS AA Doda will notify Mr. Abdallah, and post the information on the Town's website so that residents may attend if possible.

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved to continue the Road Acceptance Public Hearing until the Selectmen's meeting of April 19th, 2018; Selectman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

The Public Hearing was continued until April 19th, 2018 at 7:55pm.

3.2 Inventory Forms Discontinuation

Selectman Buckley would be interested in seeing the Town discontinue the use of the Inventory Forms. The Inventory Form was explained as a way to see if residents did work on their homes without procuring the appropriate permits; a \$50 penalty is added to one's taxes if it is not returned.

Selectman Buckley believes that there is no valuable information gleaned from these forms, especially as the information is not forwarded to the Building Inspector. He added that Assistant Assessor Jean Packard would not have a problem discontinuing them.

Planning Coordinator Hadik stated that in 2016, the census data provided on these forms proved quite useful in calculating impact fees. He would be in favor of retaining them. He added that a resident of Londonderry, which does not use the inventory forms, reported to him that each year they pay an outside company to visually compare Google Maps images from year to year to gather their inventory data.

It is unknown if the new software, Avitar, has a module that would allow the information obtained to be

shared with other departments. If this is so, they could be valuable to retain.

Selectman Buckley moved that next year the Town no longer utilize the Inventory Forms; Selectman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was two in favor and two opposed with Selectman D’Angelo absent; motion fails.

This subject will be discussed again at a later date.

3.3 Crowley Woods Warrant Article

Chuck Myette joined the Selectmen at the meeting table in order to discuss Crowley Woods.

He described the property, which is ~184 acres along Crowley Road. One must go through Candia to access the rest of Chester. Concern has been expressed about its remote location and the resulting negative and disproportionate impact to the Town’s infrastructure: roads, emergency services, school, etc. Services to be expended would be greater than the tax income received.

The property owner has recently offered to sell this property to the Town for \$2M rather than develop it. The Strategic Land Protection Committee is in favor of this action; the Conservation Commission is willing to provide \$500k from the Conservation Fund (which currently holds \$700k) with the Town procuring a ten-year Bond to make up the other \$1.5M.

Mr. Myette noted that this would not necessarily be purchased as a Conservation property, but there would be some protection. Planning Coordinator Hadik has drafted a Cost Avoidance scenario which shows that the purchase would begin to pay for itself after seven (7) years. He and Mr. Myette described it as “pay some now or pay more later”.

A Warrant Article has been drafted, and currently reads as follows:

Shall the Town of Chester vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) for the acquisition of approximately 183 acres of land known as Tax Map 011 Lot 030 (the property formerly known as Crowley Woods), and to further authorize the issuance of one million, five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Chapter 33), and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate the bonds or notes and determine the rates of interest thereon, and to authorize the withdrawal of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) from the Conservation Fund to offset a portion of said appropriation, and to authorize the Selectmen to accept any funds from public and private sources, as they may become available, and to take any other action necessary to carry out this vote, and further, to raise and appropriate the additional sum of twenty two thousand, one hundred eighty three dollars (\$22,183) for the first year payment of the bond? This article must pass by a 2/3 majority ballot vote.

Tax Impact: \$0.04

Vice-Chairman Cannon stated that he is not in favor of this purchase. He hasn’t spoken with anyone who thinks it’s a good idea, he would not be in favor of decimating the Conservation Fund, he doesn’t believe that residents will want to incur the tax impact with the hopes of gaining seven years down the road, and finally, the housing market may well tank and if it does, development will never happen.

Selectman Buckley stated that adding sixty (60) houses would cost the Town more in the long run than this purchase would; it would pay for itself.

Planning Coordinator Hadik stated that by year eight the Town would be avoiding the expenditure of an extra \$400k; by year ten, ~\$500k. He has taken road repair costs into account when he prepared this cost avoidance document. He would like this question placed in front of the voters so that they may understand what drives their taxes and allow them to determine their future.

Chairman Trask asked what use the parcel would be to the Town, due to its remote location. Mr. Myette replied that it could be open space, a cemetery, recreation fields, part of the greenbelt, a solar farm, trails could be built, etc.

Chairman Trask believes that any property purchased by the Town should have a municipal use, and that a written strategy is needed – what to purchase, why, should it have an easement on it, etc. The Town does not currently have such a document. Selectman Owens agreed that no such planning document was available from any of the Town's entities. Mr. Myette agreed that no entity has supplied a plan, but that the Conservation Commission itself does have one - a plan containing a list of the properties they'd be interested in purchasing or placing an easement upon, four of which are over 100 acres.

Chairman Trask added that this is very last minute, and there is much to do legally before this Article can be on the Warrant. A Public Hearing has been noticed for next Thursday, April 19th; he has asked the Bond Counsel if a supplemental Budget Hearing is also necessary.

Rhonda Lamphere stood and was recognized; she is speaking as a citizen. She pointed out that a subdivision off of Fremont Road was similar to that planned for Crowley Woods. At the time that subdivision had been started, the Town did not have the emergency equipment and personnel it does now. If a similar 'cost avoidance' study had been done on that subdivision, would those concerns have proven to be justified? Although she appreciates the work of Planning Coordinator Hadik and the Strategic Land Protection Committee, what could the Town use the Crowley Woods property for?

Selectman Buckley replied that the Town owned several pieces of property that were not 'useful'; based on history, however, each new house in Town costs the taxpayer money.

Selectman Buckley moved that the *Crowley Woods Bond Warrant Article* be moved to the Warrant if all legal requirements can be met; Selectman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Chairman Trask opposed and Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

Chairman Trask asked if any grants or any other sources of funding were available; this is unknown at the time.

Mr. Myette and Planning Coordinator Hadik departed the meeting table at 8:41pm.

3.4 Spring Hill Farm High Tunnel

Selectman Buckley, as a member of the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee, stated that a party had expressed interest in renting the High Tunnel at Spring Hill Farm. The SHFAC plans to discuss it at their next meeting on Monday, April 16th, 2018. The other Selectmen believe that the High Tunnel's availability should be advertised; it will be mentioned on the Town's webpage and the "Chester NH Front Porch Chatter" Facebook page. However, time is growing short and Selectman Buckley would prefer to rent it to the interested party. Selectman Buckley stated that the SHFAC will be asked to edit a draft rental agreement and he will bring it back to the Selectmen to get their input on the terms.

Selectman Buckley moved to allow the SHFAC to proceed with the High Tunnel rental agreement; Vice-Chairman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Chairman Trask opposed and Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

IV. Selectmen's Business

4.1 Roundtable

Vice-Chairman Cannon:

- Nothing to report.

Selectman Owens:

- Nothing to report.

Selectman Buckley:

- Nothing to report.

Chairman Trask:

- Nothing to report.

4.2 Public Comment

Road Agent Oleson stood and was recognized. He stated that he would be contacting Dubois & King to set up a site walk on Isaac Foss Road at their earliest convenience. The Selectmen and Mr. Abdallah will be notified as to the date and time of the walk. BOS AA Doda will post the information on the Town's webpage and the "Chester NH Front Porch Chatter" Facebook page in order that residents and other interested parties may attend.

As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 8:51pm.

4.3 Non-Public Sessions

Selectman Owens moved that the Board go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Public Employees and RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputation; Vice-Chairman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

The meeting room was closed at 8:52pm.

Mr. Ricker departed the meeting room at 8:59pm; Police Chief Berube entered at that time.

The meeting room was re-opened at 9:13pm, and Police Chief Berube departed the meeting at that time.

Chairman Trask moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Selectman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

Selectman Buckley moved that the minutes to the first non-public session, on Reputation, be sealed for a period of ninety (90) days; Selectman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

Selectman Buckley moved that the minutes to the second non-public session, on Public Employees, be sealed for a period of one (1) year; Selectman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

V. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Thursday, April 19th, 2018.

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved to adjourn the meeting; Selectman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman D'Angelo absent; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra H. Doda
Recording Secretary