

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, April 26th, 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
Spring Hill Farm High Tunnel and Foodscaping Class
Reclassifying of Class VI Roads
Maintenance Position
Town Administrator
Inventory Form Discontinuation
Roundtable
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Trask called this meeting of the Town of Chester Board of Selectmen to order at 7:00pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Jack Cannon
Steve D'Angelo
Jeremy Owens
Dick Trask

Selectmen absent:

Cass Buckley

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Maryann Boulter, SHFAC
Tiffany Coroka, SHFAC
Colin Costine
Emily Kunelius, SHFAC
Kendall Kunelius, SHFAC
Cindy LeBlanc, Agricultural Commission
Richard LeBlanc
Chuck Myette
Nancy Myette
James Piper
Christa Weaver
Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times
Laura Yacek
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

There were neither additions nor deletions.

1.5 Public Comments

Laura Yacek stood and was recognized; her property abuts the ‘Rangeway’ that was discussed at last week’s meeting. She stated her opposition to any change in status of the ‘Rangeway’ to a Class V road, noting that it adds to the rural appeal of Chester and is used for recreation. She opined that converting the ‘Rangeway’ to a Class V road would decrease property values, and is opposed to any paving or development. She asked that abutters be notified any time this sort of change was proposed.

Jeff Sinclair stood and was recognized; his property also abuts the ‘Rangeway’. He is opposed to any change to this road, stating that it has significant value for recreation and wildlife.

Richard LeBlanc stood and was recognized. He stated that the Spring Hill Farm Trustees own the High Tunnel at Spring Hill Farm, and that they put in the well and the electric panel, not the Town. He asked how the Town could rent out something they do not own.

As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:07pm.

II. Old Business

2.1 Approval of Minutes

An approval sheet for the previous weeks’ 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 Spring Hill Farm High Tunnel and Foodscaping Class - SHFAC

Maryann Boulter, Tiffany Coroka, Emily Kunelius, and Kendall Kunelius of the SHFAC, Cindy LeBlanc of the Agricultural Commission, and Christa Weaver appeared before the Selectmen to discuss the rental of the High Tunnel and a Foodscaping Class, both at Spring Hill Farm.

They have completed their Mission Statement and distributed it to the Selectmen:

Our purpose is to act as a liaison between the people of Chester and the Board of Selectmen in regards to the present and future uses of Spring Hill Farm in accordance to the wishes of Muriel Church.

Our mission is to utilize the farmland for agricultural endeavors to foster conservation and stewardship, provide educational opportunities, and support recreational activities while directly involving the community for generations to come.

Kendall Kunelius introduced Ms. Weaver, a Chester resident who approached the SHFAC about renting the High Tunnel. She has broad experience in agriculture and would like to use the High Tunnel and the area outside to grow various vegetables, flowers, and tomatoes, specifically heirloom tomatoes, which would fit well with the age of the Farm. She is willing to welcome visitors and teach them about agriculture, and would welcome volunteers as well.

Vice-Chairman Cannon asked Chuck Myette if it was true that the Trust owned the High Tunnel; Mr. Myette stated that it was true that funds from the Trust had purchased it, but that they were in favor of this project.

Vice-Chairman Cannon also asked about insurance; Ms. Weaver stated that she would be willing to procure renter's insurance. Chairman Trask suggested an umbrella policy; Selectman D'Angelo inquired if community gardening organizations might be able to provide insurance assistance.

Chairman Trask suggested running any lease agreement through Town Counsel. Ms. Weaver would be able to access the High Tunnel before rental began to clean it out if she signs a volunteer form.

Ms. Weaver departed the meeting at 7:19pm.

Ms. LeBlanc, of the Agricultural Commission, then spoke about the concept of 'Foodscaping', which is the practice of incorporating vegetables into your landscaping. The Agricultural Commission would like to hold a workshop, perhaps on June 9th. They would plant around the foundation of the Farmhouse at Spring Hill Farm, being sure to avoid areas which might be needed for a handicap ramp. She opined that it would beautify the house as well as teach people about gardening.

She would need to purchase plants in advance, perhaps ~\$100 worth, and an irrigation system with timer for ~\$168. She would also like to utilize the old farm equipment if possible.

Vice-Chairman Cannon is pleased with the community involvement on the Spring Hill Farm property.

The RFP for haying was discussed briefly. It has not been posted as it is not complete; the SHFAC has not provided a contact name or telephone number for interested parties who have questions. It was surmised that Selectman Buckley is in possession of the final copy.

Chairman Trask asked about the possibility of a clean-up day at the Farmhouse. Kendall Kunelius will work with the Trustees and perhaps the Historical Society on this; apparently the Historical Society is quite interested in converting the Farmhouse into a museum. Chairman Trask stated that there are some modifications that would need to be made before it could be open to the public, such as a handicap ramp. Selectman D'Angelo asked if, as an historic building, there were exceptions to this requirement; for example, the farmhouse at Lamson Farm in Mont Vernon does not have a handicap ramp. Chairman Trask will check on this.

The Selectmen thanked the members of the SHFAC for their work so far; they departed the meeting at 7:31pm.

3.2 Reclassifying of Class VI Roads

Vice-Chairman Cannon stated that he had been uncomfortable with last week's discussion about converting the 'Rangeway' into a Class V road; he had been on the Board when this request was made in 2015 and not acted upon. Town Counsel Diane Gorrow was asked about the previous occasion, and her response was that there was no evidence that the 'Rangeway' was ever a public highway. Its dedication had been released prior to 1842, and as a result, the Town may not accept it for use as a Town road in the future. He noted that he was glad to see abutters present, as it would be irresponsible to make a

decision without property owners involved. Selectman D'Angelo agreed, stating that by case law it was a 'Rangeway' or path, not a Class VI or public road.

Vice-Chairman Cannon added that he believed the Town was being threatened with references to a gravel pit, low income housing, and taking the Town to court.

Colin Costine stood and was recognized. He stated that the Selectmen have no authority in the matter; if Mr. Forsyth wants this road opened, he would need to petition to place an article in the Warrant for Town Meeting.

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved that the Board of Selectmen do not act on the request to change the 'Rangeway' to a Class V road; Selectman D'Angelo seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Buckley absent; motion carried.

3.3 Maintenance Position

There was much discussion on whether this position should be part-time or full-time; in the end it was agreed that it would be full-time. The posting will be refreshed and interviews will begin after Town Meeting.

3.4 Town Administrator

Selectman Buckley provided another Town Administrator job description to Selectman Owens, believing it was more in line with what the Selectmen were expecting than the one discussed last week.

It was agreed that what was needed was consistent management structure and processes; this is difficult to achieve due to the regular changing of the Selectmen.

3.5 Inventory Form Discontinuation

Two weeks ago, Selectman Buckley had floated the idea of discontinuing the inventory forms. A motion made to that effect had failed. Chairman Trask stated that he had originally voted against the discontinuation, but after doing some research had changed his mind. He stated that the information gathered was not being used much, and that the revenue gained was offset by the cost of manpower, printing, postage, etc. He stated that only ~15% of New Hampshire towns currently use these forms; the remainder check for building updates via satellite.

Selectman D'Angelo dissented, stating that there is a value to the information provided, such as census data. Selectman Owens stated that census data could be obtained from the Federal Government, but as Selectman D'Angelo said, that is only updated once every ten years.

Chairman Trask moved that starting 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 Buckley absent; motion fails.

This subject will be discussed again at a later date.

IV. Selectmen's Business

4.1 Roundtable

Vice-Chairman Cannon:

- Nothing to report.

Selectman D'Angelo:

- He inquired about the electronic signs that were donated from the City of Manchester to the Fire Department a few years ago. He would be in favor of them being put up at the Maintenance Garage and Transfer Station on Friday, May 4th, 2018, advertising Town Elections and Town Meeting. There were no objections. BOS AA Doda will contact the Fire Department.

Selectman Owens:

- Nothing to report.

Chairman Trask:

- Police Chief Berube has drafted an advertisement for the Wason Pond Ranger position. The Selectmen reviewed it and approved with no changes. **Vice-Chairman Cannon moved to go forward with hiring for the Wason Pond Ranger position; Selectman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Buckley absent; motion carried.**
- The American Legion would like to utilize the Transfer Station for a car wash on the Saturday before Memorial Day, which would be May 26th, as there is a well there. Vice-Chairman Cannon asked about the run-off; as Mr. Myette was still in attendance, he was available to share his knowledge. According to Mr. Myette, car washes are receiving more scrutiny these days due to the soap and wax containing PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). He suggested that products used be phosphate and PFAS free. The Selectmen agreed that they would grant permission with the caveat that environmentally friendly products must be used.
- The Cooper hearing was April 16th; Attorney Bennet is still waiting for the court's decision.
- The Joint Loss Management Committee has suggested that no smoking signs be posted at the Town Fields and Wason Pond, where it has already been designated as non-smoking. The Selectmen agreed to this request. The JLMC also suggested that the Town's ordinances be changed to reflect that these areas are non-smoking, thus allowing the Police Department to issue fines. Chairman Trask will contact Town Counsel about this issue; Selectman D'Angelo suggested that the ordinance, once in place, should be posted in those areas.
- The Conservation Commission has requested that the Selectmen approve a Conservation Easement for a 25 acre parcel owned by the Hawkins family, Map/Lot 7-18-2. This parcel can be accessed from the Old Chester Turnpike and will be monumented at its entrance points. The easement has been donated to the Town; the only costs are surveying and legal fees, which were paid by the Conservation Fund.

V. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Thursday, May 3rd, 2018.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra H. Doda
Recording Secretary