

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, October 26th, 2017
Municipal Complex
Approved Minutes**

I Preliminaries

Call the Meeting to Order
Roll Call
Pledge of Allegiance
Chairman's Additions and Deletions
Public Comment
Approval of Minutes
Items for Signature
Fire Department Pinning Ceremony
Spring Hill Farm Petition
Release of Impact Fees
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 7:00pm.

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Cass Buckley
Jack Cannon
Steve D'Angelo
Jeremy Owens
Dick Trask

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Myrick Bunker, Fire Department	Molly Qualters
Ben Clark, Deputy Fire Chief	TJ Qualters
Sandy Clark	Darrell Quinn
Corinne Dodge	Baron Richardson
Eric Emerson, Fire Lieutenant	Will Sable
Phil Gladu, Fire Captain	Ted Scott, Fire Department
Nancy Hoijer	Angela Sweet
Brenda Galotti-Holland	Jay Sweet
Karl Knudsen	David Veale
Cindy Landau	Maria Veale
Steph Landau	Brad Wamsley
The MacFarland Family	Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times
Nancy Myette	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

Molly Qualters stood and was recognized. She suggested that everyone overcome their anger and work together to come up with the best solution for the Town. She noted that Wason Pond is a Town-owned property without a caretaker and that requires much attention by the police; she believes the Sweets presence at Spring Hill Farm is beneficial.

Sandy Clark stood and was recognized. She identified herself as a neighbor to Miss Church, and stated that she does not understand why the Sweet family is being evicted. She opined that the Trust document mandates that Miss Church’s relatives must be allowed to live in the Farmhouse (this is not the case) and inquired if there is someone else who wants to use the land.

Corinne Dodge stood and was recognized. She identified herself as a friend of Miss Church, and stated that Miss Church wanted her Farm to live on after her death. She left the Farm to the Town, but thought that her cousins’ children might like to live there. She was happy to hear that Miss Church’s wishes were being fulfilled, but sad to hear now that the Sweets are being evicted.

TJ Qualters stood and was recognized. He asked what plans the Selectmen had for the property. Selectman Buckley stated that the subject had been discussed many times in Board of Selectmen and Spring Hill Farm Trustees meeting; they can be watched on the PACT channel or the minutes can be read.

Maria Veale stood and was recognized. She opined that if there was clear, readily available information, residents wouldn’t have attended the meeting to ask questions.

As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:14pm.

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 Fire Department Pinning Ceremony: Chester & Derry, Field Birth

Deputy Fire Chief Ben Clark appeared before the Selectmen for a special ceremony.

In the early morning hours of July 15th of this year, members of the Derry and Chester Fire Departments responded to a call from the MacFarland residence for an imminent childbirth. Tradition calls for those who assist in a field birth to receive a stork pin; the MacFarland family, including baby Bennett, were in attendance at tonight’s meeting to hand these pins out to those who responded. Present from Chester and honored tonight were Myrick Bunker, Eric Emerson, Phil Gladu, and Ted Scott; Stefan Jacobs and Taylor Lacey were unable to attend. Members of the Derry Fire Department were also unable to attend

tonight's meeting.

3.2 Spring Hill Farm Petition – Brenda Galotti-Holland

Mrs. Galotti-Holland appeared before the Selectmen along with Mr. Richardson to discuss a petition asking the Selectmen to renew the Sweet family's lease at Spring Hill Farm.

Mrs. Galotti-Holland stated that the petition had received over 100 signatures, and that people want the eviction stopped and the lease renewed. She believes the Selectmen's plan for Spring Hill Farm is unclear. She understands that the Town has spent over \$130k on the Farm's buildings over the years, but believes that the Farm saves the Town more than that every year. Additionally, all expenditures were voted on by the residents via Warrant Articles. She stated that no tenant means no income from rent money, and paying for a security system will cost the Town money. She added that the Farm is currently open to the Public, and that it will take a lot of people cooperating together to ensure that this continues.

Mr. Richardson added that an olive branch needs to be extended – Mrs. Galotti-Holland noted that failing that, the Town can hold a Special Town Meeting to vote on the subject.

Chairman Trask read from a manual on Municipal Budgeting that indicates that a Town may not spend taxpayer funds for private benefit; the Selectmen are of the opinion that Spring Hill Farm is a private farm on public land, and it is not allowable.

Vice-Chairman Cannon noted that Town Counsel had advised that there was no compelling reason to hold a Special Town Meeting, and added that the Petition had been written to request that the Selectmen renew the lease, not that they hold a Special Town Meeting. He noted that a majority of the signers had neither voted nor attended Town Meeting in the past four years; he wondered why they were showing an interest now.

Chairman Trask stated that the Selectmen would be forming a Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee and requested interested parties to volunteer to serve on it.

Mrs. Galotti-Holland asked about stopping the eviction. Vice-Chairman Cannon stated that the process had been put on hold due to the complaints filed against the Town by the Sweets but that after the investigation was over and the Town vindicated, the procedure would begin again.

Selectman Buckley stated that the Selectmen's plan was to maximize the public benefit of the Farm.

Mrs. Galotti-Holland and Mr. Richardson departed the meeting at 7:50pm.

3.3 Release of Impact Fees

The Selectmen have received two letters from the Planning Board requesting the release of Impact Fees. These funds are fees collected from builders, not taxpayer money.

The first request is from the Chester Fire Department for a total of \$6,104, broken down as follows:

\$4,204 - two sets of turnout gear for the new full-time FF/EMT and the new FF/Paramedical call member
\$1,900 - a new septic design for a replacement septic system at the Chester Fire Station

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved to release \$6,104 in Impact Fees for the Chester Fire Department; Selectman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

The second request is from the Recreation Department for a total of \$30,500, broken down as follows:

- \$5,000 – MPR Sports netting, floor mats, and wall pads
- \$10,000 – Ballfield benches and bleachers
- \$5,500 – Ballfield goals and field lining equipment
- \$10,000 – Ballfield grading and reseeding

Selectman D’Angelo moved to release \$30,500 in Impact Fees for the Recreation Department; Vice-Chairman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Vice-Chairman Cannon:

- Nothing to report.

Selectman D’Angelo:

- Nothing to report.

Selectman Owens:

- Nothing to report.

Selectman Buckley:

- Nothing to report.

Chairman Trask:

- Nothing to report.

4.2 Non-Public Sessions

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved that the Board go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputation; Selectman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

The meeting room was closed at 7:55pm.

The meeting room was re-opened at 8:09pm.

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Selectman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

Vice-Chairman Cannon moved that the minutes to the non-public session on Reputation be sealed for an indefinite period; Selectman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

V. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Thursday, November 2nd, 2017.

Selectman Owens moved to adjourn the meeting; Vice-Chairman Cannon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debra H. Doda, Recording Secretary