

**Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, October 25th, 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
Eagle Scout Project
Cub Scouts Q&A
Recreation Department Petty Cash Request
Town Hall Landscaping
Tax Rate Setting
Roundtable
Non-Public Sessions
Adjournment

1.1 Call to Order

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

1.2 Roll Call

Selectmen present:

Cass Buckley
Steve D’Angelo
Stephen Landau
Jeremy Owens

Selectmen absent:

Joseph Hagan

Members of the Public present, at various times:

Myrick Bunker, Building Inspector
Members of Cub Scout Pack 163
Kevin Kistler, Recreation Commission
Rhonda Lamphere, Treasurer
Nancy Myette
Michael Oleson, Road Agent
Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director
Benjamin Qualters, Eagle Scout Candidate
Molly Qualters
Sheryl Rich, Business Administrator, SAU 82
Brian Shankey
Michelle Trask, Recreation Commission
Penny Williams, Tri-Town Times

And other persons unknown to the Recording Secretary

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Members of Cub Scout Pack 163 led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Chairman’s Additions and Deletions

A question and answer session with members of Cub Scout Pack 163 was added.

1.5 Public Comments

As no Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:01pm.

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

All members should review and sign items in the Signature Folder.

III. New Business

3.1 Eagle Scout Project – Benjamin Qualters

Benjamin Qualters, Eagle Scout Candidate from Troop 163, appeared before the Selectmen to discuss his recently completed Eagle Scout Project. This project, a beautification of the Fire Department memorial area, had been proposed and approved in June 2018.

Mr. Qualters and his team enhanced and beautified the landscaping at the Fire Department by digging up the old dead plants, planting mums, azaleas, and rhododendrons, and mulching. He plans to replace the mums with lilacs in the Spring. They also moved the Volunteer Firefighters’ Monument from in front of the Post Office to in front of the Fire Station with the assistance of Rich Bellemore. The new placement of the stone forms a Maltese cross, symbol of the Fire Service. The team spent about 350 man hours on this project from planning to completion.

Vice-Chairman Buckley pointed out that there are quite a few lilacs on the Spring Hill Farm property and their suckers could be available for transplant; Mr. Qualters was advised to speak to the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee.

Mr. Qualters exhorted the Cub Scouts in attendance to work on their merit badges early in their scouting career.

Selectman Landau, who is Mr. Qualters’ Eagle Scout Coach, stated that the original Fire Department memorial area had been an Eagle Scout project some 15-18 years ago, and that Mr. Qualters had done very well with minimal assistance due to Selectman Landau’s recent unexpected absence.

Selectman D’Angelo moved to accept Benjamin Qualters’ Eagle Scout Project and release him from liability; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor with Selectman Hagan absent and Selectman Landau recused; motion carried.

Chairman Owens signed the Letter of Release.

Mr. Qualters thanked everyone who had assisted him with this project, and departed the meeting at 7:11pm.

3.2 Cub Scout Pack 163

Some members of Cub Scout Pack 163, accompanied by leader Brian Shankey, appeared before the Selectmen to ask questions about town, government, and local issues as part of their “Building a Better World” badge.

Q1: How does the Town decide where to build a new neighborhood?

Vice-Chairman Buckley replied that when someone owns a plot of land that they would like to develop into a neighborhood, they engineer a plan and then bring it to the Planning Board for approval.

Q2: Why aren’t there many businesses in Chester?

Selectman Landau replied that there are only two small areas in Town that are zoned for commercial. However, if at some point the Town wishes to create more commercial zones, the proper procedure is that the Planning Board would draft an ordinance to be voted upon at the Town Elections in May.

Q3: What do the Selectmen do for the Town?

Selectman D’Angelo replied that the Selectmen put together a budget for the Town to approve, and then they manage the spending.

Q4: How does the Town Government make money?

Selectman Landau replied that the Scouts’ parents pay property taxes on the value of their homes, and that the State collects other sorts of taxes, such as meals tax, and then gives a little of that back to the Towns. Selectman D’Angelo added income of car and boat registrations, as well as dog licenses. However, as Vice-Chairman Buckley pointed out, the majority of the Town’s income is from property taxes.

The members of Cub Scout Pack 163 thanked the Selectmen and departed the meeting at 7:17pm.

3.3 Petty Cash Request – Recreation Director Reishus

Recreation Director Corinna Reishus appeared before the Selectmen at their invitation, as the Recreation Commission had requested permission to have a \$50 Petty Cash box. These funds would be withdrawn from the Recreation Revolving Fund and mainly used as a ‘bank’ during its rare cash functions.

Recreation Director Reishus reported that Finance Director Smith had recommended that having this Petty Cash box was the best way to handle the need for a ‘bank’ in accordance with Town Policy. The account would be reconciled each month, and the funds would be stored in a locked cash box inside a locked wall mounted safe.

After confirming that \$50 was sufficient for their needs, and that there was no way to take credit or debit cards during one of these events, the Selectmen agreed that they found this explanation satisfactory.

Vice-Chairman Buckley moved to allow the Recreation Department to have \$50 in Petty Cash, said funds to be withdrawn from the Revolving Fund; Selectman Landau seconded the

motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; motion carried.

Recreation Director Reishus departed the meeting table at 7:22pm.

3.4 Town Hall Landscaping

Vice-Chairman Buckley reported that Jean Methot had planted daffodil bulbs in the landscaping in front of the Municipal Complex. Other than being mulched last year by the County Workers, this garden has received no real attention for a few years. Selectman Landau pointed out that there is a resident who takes care of the landscaping around the flagpoles, and another that does the Post Office. Selectman D’Angelo added that the Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee has done a great job with the landscaping over at Spring Hill Farm.

If there are any residents who would like to take over the landscaping at the Municipal Complex, they are more than welcome to volunteer to beautify it.

3.5 Tax Rate Setting

The NH DRA has tentatively set the Town’s 2018 tax rate at \$24.25, broken down as follows:

	2018	2017	\$ Change	% Change
Town	\$ 6.87	\$ 6.30	\$0.57	8%
County	\$ 1.09	\$ 1.02	\$0.07	6%
State School	\$ 2.26	\$ 2.36	(\$0.10)	(4%)
Local School	\$14.03	\$13.73	\$0.30	2%
	\$24.25	\$23.41	\$0.84	3%

Selectman D’Angelo noted that last year Vice-Chairman Buckley had argued unsuccessfully against using \$200k of the Town’s Undesignated Fund Balance to keep the tax rate level at the previous year’s \$23.41, arguing that this kept it artificially low. This year, in order to keep the tax rate at \$23.41, the Town would need to use closer to ~\$500k of the UFB, and he was not in favor; Vice-Chairman Buckley concurred. Selectman Landau stated that the Town’s portion of the tax rate had increased this year by \$0.57 but he was also not in favor of using the UFB.

Selectman D’Angelo pointed out that the School had used their budget surplus of ~\$427k to reduce their portion of the tax rate; the School’s Finance Administrator, Sheryl Rich, agreed. He added that they were running a surplus again this year; Ms. Rich agreed again, stating that few students slated for Pinkerton had actually enrolled this year.

Selectman Landau noted that there are too many items being included in the CIP that are ‘wants’ rather than ‘needs’. Vice-Chairman Buckley agreed with this; he would like the Selectmen to urge restraint when they meet with the Planning Board to review the CIP requests, and would like to talk further about what level of service needs to be provided to the Town.

Selectman D’Angelo moved to accept the Town portion of the tax rate at \$6.87; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; motion carried.

Setting the tax rate at \$24.25 means an extra ~\$199 in annual taxes for a \$350k house.

IV. Selectmen’s Business

4.1 Roundtable

Selectman Landau:

- He has three estimates for a new Annex roof. All three contractors advised against doing only half of the roof, as it could void the warranty. One also advised that the flat sections of the roof be done at the same time. Prices range from \$21k to \$42k. BOS AA Doda will send out the quotes and a matrix to the other Selectmen for their perusal.
- The Municipal Complex will be open during the Halloween festivities in order to allow visitors to use the restrooms. He and Selectman D’Angelo both plan to be in attendance.

Selectman D’Angelo:

- Nothing to report.

Vice-Chairman Buckley:

- Nothing to report.

Chairman Owens:

- Busche Academy has offered to allow visitors to park in their lots on Halloween night. They ask that parking is confined to paved areas, not the grass.
- Selectmen should complete evaluations of their liaisons by November 1st and provide copies to BOS AA Doda. They will be copied and distributed for discussion at a later meeting.
- Selectmen should contact BOS AA Doda with their availability on Election Day - Tuesday, November 6th, 2018.

4.2 Public Comment

Rhonda Lamphere stood and was recognized. She asked, speaking as the Town’s Treasurer, why the Selectmen were allowing the Recreation Department to have a petty cash box. She is not in favor, stating that there have been problems in the past with cash not being managed or monitored well. She would prefer to increase BOS AA Doda’s petty cash account and allow her to provide the Recreation Director with \$50 with cash as needed with the expectation that it would be returned after the event.

The Selectmen do not plan on revisiting their decision.

As no other Members of the Public wished to be heard, Public Comment was closed at 7:53pm.

4.3 Non-Public Sessions

Selectman Landau moved that the Board go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Property and (e) Pending Litigation; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; motion carried.

The meeting room was closed at 7:54pm.

Building Inspector Bunker and Road Agent Oleson remained in the meeting room.

Building Inspector Bunker and Road Agent Oleson departed the meeting room at 8:12pm; Recreation Coordinator Reishus and Recreation Commission members Kevin Kistler and Michelle Trask entered at that time.

Recreation Coordinator Reishus and Recreation Commission members Kevin Kistler and Michelle Trask departed the meeting at 8:46pm.

The meeting room was re-opened at 9:07pm.

Selectman Landau moved that the Board come out of non-public session; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; motion carried.

Selectman D’Angelo moved that the minutes to the first non-public session, on Pending Litigation, be sealed for a period of one (1) year; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; motion carried.

Selectman D’Angelo moved that the minutes to the second non-public session, on Property, be sealed for a period of six (6) months; Vice-Chairman Buckley seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; motion carried.

V. Adjournment

As there is difficulty achieving a quorum on November 1st, the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be Thursday, November 8th, 2018. The Selectmen will have a work session on Monday, October 29th, 2018 to work on the CIP.

Selectman Landau moved to adjourn the meeting; Chairman Owens seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with Selectman Hagan absent; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra H. Doda
Recording Secretary