

TOWN OF CHESTER
SELECT BOARD
December 2, 2020
Select Board Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Arne Jonynas; Lee Gustafson; Leigh Dakin; Heather Chase; Jeff Holden; Julie Hance; Amie O'Brien

VISITORS: SapaTV; Shawn Cunningham; Sharon Huntley; Jill Barger; Kirby Putnam; Robert Nied; Ed Grossman; Peter Hudkins; Leslie Thorsen; Deirdra Doran

Meeting was held via Zoom and at the Town Hall.

1. APPROVE MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 18, 2020 SELECT BOARD MEETING

A motion was made by Heather Chase to approve the Minutes of the November 18, 2020 Select Board meeting. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

Leigh Dakin's name is spelled wrong on page three.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS/ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Leslie Thorsen approached the Select Board to read a letter she had written. The letter states she is concerned the Police Policies being reviewed by Trevor Whipple at VLCT is a conflict because he has been involved in law enforcement for years. The new building will require a lot of new policies and procedures to be followed by the department. She would like the Select Board to assemble a Civilian Police Oversight Advisory Board to review policies and procedures, and to make sure the citizens of Chester have input and oversight. The board she is proposing will also review citizens' concerns and complaints having to do with the Police Department. The Governor passed an executive order stating the town is required to create such a board. She would like this added to a future Agenda for further review.

Arne Jonynas stated the Select Board will not discuss it at this time and requested a copy of the letter she read for the board's review.

3. OLD BUSINESS

Police Policies and Procedures: These have been sent to VLCT for review. New policies and procedures are being added for the new portions of the new building.

Trucks Parking at Jiffy Mart: The potholes created by trucks parking on 103 at the new Jiff Mart have been filled. Posts have been added about 6 inches from the sidewalk to prevent truck drivers from parking in that spot.

Speed Signs: Leigh Dakin pointed out log trucks and other traffic speed down Grafton Road. She would like new speed signs added to Graton Road soon. Julie Hance stated the Police Department must hold off on pulling people over for speeding due to the Governor's COVID orders. There cannot be any routine traffic stops at this time. The cost for a portable speed sign is \$9,653. Arne Jonynas reminded everyone that the pandemic is still a serious issue and would like everyone to wear a mask, social distance, and follow COVID guidelines.

4. APPOINT ASSISTANT FIRE WARDEN

Jeff Holden is the Fire Warden and has been for many years. He would like to step down at some point and create a smooth transition by appointing an Assistant Fire Warden to eventually take his place. In 2020, there has been one brush fire from a campfire and one illegal burn. The Fire Warden is appointed every five years. This appointment will not affect the 2021 budget. Heather Chase would like the board to review the compensation for these two positions.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to appoint Ben Whalen as Assistant Fire Warden for a five-year term starting on January 1, 2021. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

5. 2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET; PUBLIC WORKS; LIBRARY

Kirby Putnam explained the Highway Department budget is pretty much the same as last year. The price per ton for salt dropped a little for 2021. Calcium Chloride has been increased some due to the dusty summer as it helps stabilize the roads. The Popple Dungeon bridge just past Nudist Camp Road will be repaired with concrete footings bringing the cost for bridge materials up. There is still a stock pile of gravel and what is needed for 2021 will depend on mud season. A line item has been added for a roadside mower. Peck Road will need to be paved and the numbers for this will be brought to the board later. Popple Dungeon, Lover's Lane, and Cavendish Road also need paving but the paving on Cavendish Road might be held off. Bonds are good to use for paving because they can be paid off before the roads need repair again. The Select Board will decide what to do with the surplus at the end of the year. The money could be used to replace one of the dump trucks. COVID has not affected the Highway Department much this year, except in March. The department finished the bridge on Smokeshire quickly and hauled the gravel for the Public Safety building.

The Library employees are managed by the Library Trustees. The town allocates money to the library for the trustees to spend where they see fit. The 2021 budget will stay about the same with a small decrease in payroll. A 4% increase has been added for a stipend to help the library employees pay for their healthcare costs. Robert Nied stated he is happy the town and library can work together, and communication has been affective. Ed Grossman pointed out the Librarian, Deirdra Doran, has done a good job modifying the services offered by the library. She has been conservative in spending because fees are down due to COVID. The town of Andover is contributing \$100 more to the budget for 2021.

PROPOSAL TO DESIGN ADDITIONAL BAY AT TOWN GARAGE

Kevin Racik is finalizing the design plan for the town garage and has met with Kirby Putnam to talk about options for adding a space for an in-house mechanic. The bays at the town garage are not tall enough for the equipment needed to add this position to the location. Adding this to the design now would cost an additional \$11,500. There are a lot of things to consider before the decision can be made to hire an in-house mechanic. The Select Board asked Julie Hance to find out if the engineering piece of adding the bay could be built into the design first and asked her to get a cost for this piece only. This bay would not be added until much later.

6. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA

The No Thru Truck signs have been added to both ends of Church Street. The State has given the authority to waive requirements for people running for office and organizations requesting appropriations to bring in petitions. The Select Board will have to approve this at the next meeting. Arne Jonynas asked if there is a way to get virtual signatures. Julie Hance will look into that. Town meeting might be informational only. The items voted on the floor at the meeting can be added to the Australian Ballot. This decision will have to be made by the end of January. The Grant Budget, Capital Budget, and Reserve Fund Policy will be added to the next Agenda.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION: INTERVIEW CANDIDATE FOR ZONING ADMINISTRATOR POSITION

Select Board did not require an Executive Session for an interview.

8. APPOINT ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

The Planning Commission nominated Jill Barger for the Zoning Administration position. She has a legal background and is well qualified for the position. To start, her focus will be bylaw and ordinance enforcement. Lee Gustafson asked her to explain her comment about having a keen interest in environmental preservation and how she would maintain economic sustainability. He would like common sense to be applied while addressing environmental concerns. She stated her main concern is quality of life in a small town. This requires people to follow basic rules and standards. Environmental preservation and economic sustainability can go hand in hand. She feels Chester must have an industry to match community needs.

A motion was made to by Lee Gustafson to appoint Jill Barger as the Zoning Administrator for a three-year term to expire in 2023. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The motion passed.

Peter Hudkins thanked Cathy Hasbrouck for filling this position until someone was hired. He pointed out applications for building permits doubled from last year. She will stay on for a while to help train Jill Barger.

9. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Amie O'Brien
Secretary of the Select Board

Lee Gustafson
Clerk of the Select Board

TOWN OF CHESTER
WATER/WASTEWATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

December 2, 2020
Following Select Board Meeting

Meeting was held via Zoom and at the Town Hall.

PRESENT: Arne Jonynas; Lee Gustafson; Leigh Dakin; Heather Chase; Jeff Holden; Julie Hance;
Amie O'Brien

VISITORS: SapaTV

1. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

No citizens comment.

2. 2021 WATER BUDGET

The town has two large water users, which are Drew's and the car wash. Jeff Holden explained he is trying to be sure the tanks can handle the usage if businesses continue to increase in town. There will need to be a permanent generator add to the Jeffrey Well, and chlorine meters and a chemical feed pump added to both wells.

3. 2021 SEWER BUDGET

The sewer plant will need to be upgraded in 7 or 8 years. This year, the main pump's controls which thicken the waste have been replaced. Jeff Holden is happy with his two employees and feels they maintain things well. They catch problems while they are happening to prevent further damage. He prefers to rebuild the pumps rather than replace them because the repairs will last a long time and it costs less. The surplus from the department will go into the bench account. The sewer bond will be paid off in 8 years. The plan for upgrading the plant will start in 6 years.

4. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Amie O'Brien
Secretary of the Select Board

Lee Gustafson
Clerk of the Select Board