

TOWN OF CHESTER
January 20, 2021
WATER/SEWER COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

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

VISITORS: SapaTV; Tim Roper; Robert Nied; Shawn Cunningham; Ben Whalen; Cheryl Joy Lipton; Melody Reed; David Carey

Meeting was held via Zoom and at the Town Hall.

1. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

No comments.

2. APPROVE FINAL WATER BUDGET

The Water Department ended with surplus after 2020. The Water Commissioners approved the 2021 budget.

3. APPROVE FINAL SEWER BUDGET

The Sewer Department ended with a surplus after 2020. The Sewer Commissioners approved the 2021 budget.

4. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Water/Sewer rates will not go up in the future. Jeff Holden explained the department is trying to increase water production to meet the needs of the town. Drew's, which consumes a large amount of water, is adding a device to help save 20,000 gallons a day.

Amie O'Brien
Secretary of the Select Board

Lee Gustafson
Clerk of the Select Board

TOWN OF CHESTER
SELECT BOARD
January 20, 2021
Special Select Board Meeting Minutes

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

VISITORS: SapaTV; Tim Roper; Robert Nied; Shawn Cunningham; Ben Whalen; Cheryl Joy Lipton; Melody Reed; David Carey; Lisa Holderness; Cathy Hasbrouck; Lynn Russell; Ginger Roper; Nancy Chute

Meeting was held via Zoom and at the Town Hall.

1. APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 2, 2020 WATER/SEWER COMMISSIONER'S MEETING; MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 6, 2021 SELECT BOARD MEETING

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the Minutes of the December 2, 2020 Water/Sewer Commissioner's meeting as written. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the Minutes of the January 6, 2021 Select Board meeting as written. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS/ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

No citizens comment.

3. OLD BUSINESS

Public Safety Building: The final slab will be poured soon, and the interior walls will be started soon. The construction manager on the job is doing a great job and the project is staying within budget. The department heads have stopped by the site and are happy with the progress. The projected completion date is the first week of June. The town garage renovation plans are being worked up and going out to bid. This project is expected to be finished the first week in November.

Police Department: Julie Hance has been working with Jim Carroll on the community advisory board. This will be presented to the board at the second meeting in February. The police policies are still being reviewed.

Jeffrey Barn: Steve Mancuso has been contacting contractors in town to see if they would be willing to help with the renovation to the barn. Jeff Holden will let them inside to get an idea of what needs to be done. They will report back to Julie Hance with a plan. Arne Jonynas would like to be there when they go look at it. Lee Gustafson stopped to check it out. Jeff Holden feels the company that took parts of the building left a mess and took things they did not have to. He thinks the building is salvageable and has not changed in 12 years.

Fall Festival: Members from the community have gotten together to discuss the future of the festival. The group includes merchants on the Greene that would like to see the event continue. They are working on applying for a 501 c3 to obtain nonprofit status. There are some suggested changes to the festival considered. Jeff Holden stated the legion would like to be involved and could help with the planning process. Leigh Dakin pointed out the high school was always involved in the event for fundraising purposes and she would like them to be involved.

4. CHESTER COMMUNITY GREENHOUSE & GARDENS PRESENTATION

Members from Chester Community Greenhouse committee submitted a packet to the Select Board before the meeting for review. They have become a nonprofit and are now tax deductible. They have received \$5,400 in grants and donations for the cause so far. There is now a website for community members to visit and they will be holding a contest to develop a logo. A study is being conducted to see if the greenhouse will be sustainable all year. The committee is still searching for a site to put the greenhouse. Members would like the site to be within town limits so people can walk. The greenhouse will be for community member as well as to attract visitors. The plan will include things such as where a water source will be and a long-term plan in case the greenhouse does not make it financially. The greenhouse has some lead paint, but the state has agreed to certify the structure after it has been painted over. They are asking the Select Board for a letter of support and permission to use town property if one is found suitable.

The Select Board is in support of the idea and will sign a resolution to show the town is behind the committee's efforts. There is a lot to consider with giving permission to use town property, but the board would consider it when the details are worked out.

5. ASSISTANCE TO FIRE FIGHTER'S GRANT APPLICATION & DONATION FROM YOSEMITE ENGINE COMPANY

The Yosemite Fire Engine Company would like to reapply for a grant through FEMA that would help buy a new pumper/tanker truck for the Fire Department. They are willing to match the 5% required, about \$25,000, as to not cost the taxpayers any money. The engine company hired a grant writer for \$3,000 the last time they applied. The previous grant was written well, but others that applied needed the grant more urgently. Julie Hance will write the grant this time around. The application would be for a new tanker truck to replace the 1985 Mac tanker, which needs lots of work at this time. The tanker helps keep homeowner's insurance costs down because there are a lot of properties outside town limits without fire hydrants close by. The plan is to trade Engine 1 for a decent amount of money to help upgrade to a combination pumper/tanker truck. The grant may take another 5 years to be awarded. The Select Board approves of the proposal to have Julie Hance write the application and move forward with the grant submission.

6. FINANCIAL REVIEW; 4TH QUARTER

The 4th Quarter Financial Review and 2021 General Fund Budget & Capital Plan approval merged in discussion. See below.

7. 2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET & CAPITAL PLAN APPROVAL

The year 2020 ended with a surplus of \$335,000. Department heads closely watched spending due to COVID. The staff was reorganized in the front office saving the town money. The audited surplus number in 2019 was \$267,000. The auditors recommend having a reserve to cover 2-3 months of spending in case of an emergency. Of the 2020 surplus, \$174,000 will remain with the Highway Department. Julie Hance explained 4 options of where to use the remainder to the Select Board. The board agreed on option 1, which is to put \$200,000 towards the sidewalk project, purchase a new police cruiser, finance the dump truck through the Capital Plan, and add \$20,000 to the Reserve Fund.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the 2021 General Fund & Capital Plan in the amount of \$3,342,887.01, Voted Articles in the amount of \$37,241, along with option 1. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

8. RESERVE FUND POLICY

Parameters for the Reserve Fund Policy are being set. The Reserve Fund would help keep the town from borrowing on the TAN. Lee Gustafson is concerned about having taxpayer's money sit in an account. He feels governments should not have a lot of money on hand. The money in the fund will be used for unexpected expenses such as bridge repairs and more. The auditors recommend having enough money in the fund to cover 2 months' worth of expenses. Money will be added over time to help the fund grow. Julie Hance will check with Ron Smith to see if the money can be added to a savings account to earn interest. The Reserve Fund Policy includes recommended goals for the board to follow. The Select Board has agreed to the recommendations made by the auditors for the policy. When the policy is finished it will be presented to the voters.

9. CERTIFICATE OF HIGHWAY MILEAGE

A motion was made by Heather Chase to approve the Certificate of Highway Milage for the year ending February 10, 2021. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

10. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA

The Trustee of Public Funds will meet January 21, 2021 at 10 a.m. Heather Chase would like an update on the speed limit monitoring on Andover Road, and an update from Deborah Aldrich on voting for Town Meeting. Julie Hance explained post cards are being mailed to voters explaining the process and options on how to get a ballot. This will be added to the website as well. Arne Jonynas would like a summary of the proposed changes to the Zoning Bylaws from the Planning Commission.

11. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Amie O'Brien
Secretary of the Select Board

Lee Gustafson
Clerk of the Select Board