

TOWN OF CHESTER
SELECT BOARD
June 15, 2021
Special Meeting Minutes

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

VISITORS: SAPATV; Robert Nied; Shawn Cunningham; Rose Mcdevitt; Sharon Huntley; Tim Roper; Rick Cloud; Melody Reed; Luna Burkland; Cathlyn Matracia; Cheryl Joy Lipton; Tracy Sorensen

Meeting was held via Zoom and at the Town Hall.

1. APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE June 2, 2021 SELECTBOARD MEETING

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the Minutes of the June 2, 2021 Select Board meeting as written. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The motion passed.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS/ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

No Citizens Comment.

3. OLD BUSINESS

Ash Tree Inventory: People are still needed to help inventory portions of their roads. The state will require all towns to do this at some point. The identified trees will need to be removed before they crumble and cause damage. The app provided by the state tracks what people enter, which is easy to use and straight forward. Julie Hance will get a hold of Frank Kelly and Tim Roper to see about finding more volunteers.

Brookside Trial Bridge: The bride will be constructed after the Flood Hazard Permit is obtained from the state. Engineers will design the bridge and the highway guys will do the work. There will be grant opportunities to help expand the bridge to make a walkway that will be ADA accessible.

Jeffrey Barn: Julie Hance met with Ron Patch to see what can be done first to clean up the site. The brush will be cleared out from around the barn. The monument located just north of the building will be moved closer to make it easier to see. The monument marks one of the oldest sites in Chester where there used to be an Indian encampment. The Kendall family has some of the original stone posts from the site they are willing to donate to the town. VLCT is looking into the insurance aspect and the options available.

46 Volunteer: A lady in the care of HCRS will be helping Chester Townscape water the
47 flowers around town, and a man will be weed whacking about 6 hours a week helping
48 the Cemetery Department.
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50 Ambulance Department: Amanda Silva was approved to teach an EMT class starting in
51 September.
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53 Speed Limit: Strips are going on Andover Road for 3-4 weeks with the data being ready
54 by the end of July.
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56 4. LIBERTY PLAYERS; USE OF TOWN GREEN
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58 A motion was made by Heather Chase to allow the Liberty Players to use the Green on
59 June 29, 2021, at 6 p.m. to perform a free show. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The
60 motion passed.
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62 5. COMMUNITY GREENHOUSE – LETTER OF INTENT
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64 The Letter of Intent for the Community Greenhouse Committee is being worked on by
65 Jim Carroll. The letter should be ready by the July 7, 2021 Select Board meeting. A
66 hearing will be scheduled as a public forum to gain community feedback on the idea. A
67 concerned property owner submitted a letter to the board about not wanting the Canal
68 Street property used for the greenhouse. The site still has setback issues because of the
69 secondary well located there. This will need to be cleared up with the state for the site
70 to be considered as an option for the greenhouse. The Development Review Board will
71 be involved in the process, which will have an impact on the decision.
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73 Tracy Sorensen spoke asked for clarification on what the Letter of Intent will include.
74 Julie Hance explained the letter is a statement from the town to the organization stating
75 the Select Board supports the project. The letter will provide them with intent to move
76 forward and permission to use town property. This will help when applying for grants
77 and other funding for the project. The letter will not be specific to a certain location.
78 People can reach out to Cheryl Joy Lipton, Robert Nied, or Melody Reed with questions
79 and concerns.
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81 6. COIN DROP POLICY
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83 Jeff Holden would like to see the coin drop limit be raised to 3 per year. The Legion
84 raised \$3,000 at the last coin drop and donated \$2,000 as scholarships. The policy will be
85 adopted stating 2 per year, which can be revisited later.
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87 A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the Coin Drop Policy as written.
88 Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

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7. POLICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE; INITIAL REVIEW

The Select Board was given examples of Police Advisory Committee policies used by other towns in Vermont. Milton's was brought to the board as a recommendation for them to consider. The board would like DRAFT added to the documents to avoid any confusion. There is a lot to consider before the board adopts a policy for the Chester Police Department. Jim Carroll will be asked to attend a future meeting to answer any questions the board may have. The update of the Police Policies should be completed before an advisory committee is formed. Chief Rick Cloud explained this process is almost complete. The advisory committee will need to review the policies to be sure they can assist the department properly. He stated the department will work closely with the committee members and allow them to ride along with officers in cruisers to get a feel for what the job entails. Other towns are having a hard time keeping board members because of the extent of training and knowledge needed.

Julie Hance suggested doing an assessment of the Police Department to get an understating of how the department performs. The assessment will focus on ways to improve the departments operations, not to find fault. This will help Chief Rick Cloud moving forward with the advisory committee. Community workshops and forums will be included in the process to give the public a better understanding of what community policing means. Julie Hance will create a plan and a timeline for this process.

8. VEHICLE PURCHASE; POLICE DEPARTMENT

A car will be purchased for the Police Department to be used by Detective Adam Woodell. This will free up a cruiser and make it so he will not have to use his personal vehicle. The money to purchase the vehicle will be used from savings on the cruiser being traded in. Heather Chase voiced some concerns over adding another vehicle that will need maintenance and eventually need to be replaced.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to use the money leftover from the purchase of the cruiser to buy a used vehicle for the Police Department with a spending limit of \$12,000. Seconded by Leigh Dakin

9. ARPA UPDATE; USE OF FUNDS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

Russell Construction has separated out the overrun costs spent on the Public Safety building due to COVID. Julie Hance is requesting \$120,000 of the ARPA money be used to offset these costs. This would put \$50,000 of the contingency money back to be used for the Town Garage and give Russell Construction an extra \$60,000 over the guaranteed maximum price. Russell Construction has not submitted a change order yet to raise the price and the \$60,000 should keep them from having to. There are

132 approximately \$95,000 worth of items not budgeted for including permits to the state,
133 propane tanks, and other things. This money cannot be used to cover these items.
134 Chester is getting a little over \$300,000 in ARPA funds. The State has not figured out
135 what they are going to do with the county dollars. Vermont is not run through county
136 government like many other states. If the state divides the money by town then Chester
137 would receive \$600,000.

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139 A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve \$120,000 of the ARPA money to be
140 used for the cost overrun due to COVID. With \$60,000 going to Russell Construction and
141 \$60,000 going back to the contingency. Seconded by Leigh Dakin.

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143 The recommended contingency was 10% but it was decided to go with 2.5% instead. The
144 cost overrun is about 1.9%.

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146 10. TOWN PROPERTY; GENERAL DISCUSSION

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148 The Select Board was given a list of town owned property and their values. Lee
149 Gustafson would like to go through the list to see which properties can be offloaded to
150 be put back on the Grand List. Research will need to be done because some of the land
151 was donated to the town and cannot be sold. Heather Chase would like to revisit the
152 Donation Policy and create a Town Park Policy. Town land comes with liability such as
153 mowing and upkeep. The Rainbow Rock area is covered by insurance. There is some
154 graffiti at the spot that should be taken care of. Julie Hance will ask Deborah Aldrich to
155 look in the vault to see if there is something indicating where town land is located.

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157 11. ZONING FEES

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159 The Zoning fees are outdated and need to be increased to include recording fees. The
160 increase will be small to keep the fees affordable and to help avoid violations.

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162 A motion was made by Heather Chase to accept the proposed changes to the Zoning
163 fees as outlined. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

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165 12. SIGN TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE

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167 A motion was made by Heather Chase to approve the Tax Anticipation Note, Resolution,
168 and Tax Certificate in the amount of \$200,000 to be borrowed until the end of July.
169 Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

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171 13. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA

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 - Set the tax rate.
 - Changes to Police Retirement program.

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- 175 • Speed update.
- 176 • Financial update
- 177 • Letter of Intent for the Chester Greenhouse Committee
- 178 • Public forum for the green house July 21, 2021.
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180 14. EXECUTIVE SESSION: UPDATE RE POLICE MATTER

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182 A motion was made by Heather Chase to enter Executive Session to discuss a police
183 matter. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. Jeff Holden recused himself. Julie Hance was allowed
184 in. The Select Board entered Executive Session at 7:51 p.m.

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186 A motion was made by Heather Chase to exit Executive Session. Seconded by Leigh
187 Dakin. The Select Board exited Executive Session at 8:20 p.m.

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189 No action was taken.

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191 15. ADJOURN

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193 A motion was made by Heather Chase to adjourn. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The meeting
194 adjourned at 8:20 p.m.