

TOWN OF CHESTER  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

May 8, 2020  
Select Board Meeting Minutes

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

VISITORS: Ed Grossman

***Meeting was held via Zoom.***

1. CITIZEN COMMENTS/ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

No citizens comment.

2. LIBRARY REQUEST FOR HEALTH BENEFITS

Julie Hance gave the Select Board a packet with information from the town attorney, Jim Carroll, assessing how the library relates to the town. Ed Grossman made a request at the last meeting to see if the town would help cover medical costs for two new library employees. Julie Hance found money from two places that could possibly be used for this purpose, which would be \$1000 from Architectural Services and \$500 from Library Expense. The Library Expense line item was allocated \$2,500 in 2019 which \$1,900 was spent. Heather Chase is happy to help with the medical costs knowing where the money is coming from. She pointed out that the town attorney study was from 10 years ago and should be revisited. Heather Chase is willing to sit down with the Library Board of Trustees to determine how the relationship between the town and the library can improve. Lee Gustafson agrees with Heather Chase that things need to be revisited but sees an issue with the medical costs request. The Balance Sheet from the Library shows \$368,621 available at end of year and he wants to know why the Town is being asked for money. Ed Grossman stated that the Library Board of Trustees has asked him to come to the Select Board due to unforeseen circumstances. They were unaware that Sharon Tanzer was going to retire, and these finances were not included in the library budget. With the current situation of the library being closed, he is unsure how this year will end. Lee Gustafson points out that the town is in the same situation as the Library and the funds of \$3,000 is less than 1% of the total account balance of \$368,621. He is still unsure why the library is asking the town for the money. Lee Gustafson recommended that the library work through their numbers giving the employees the money from the library.

Jeff Holden made the point that the study done 10 years ago determined that the library employees are not town employees. This makes the library employees subject to different policies. However, he is all for helping them out with the money being suggested from the two line items. Leigh Dakin points out that the budget has already been set for the library and would

like to hear from the Library Trustees. She would also like the employees to be aware of the volunteer staff that VT Health Connect has on hand to help people find the best plan and suggests that they seek help. She is not opposed to helping and feels there are ways to change how the town and library operate. Arne Jonynas feels that the town and library need to try and work better together now and in the future. He would like the library to see what they can do to help with the cost of the employee's medical expenses. The \$1,000 would not be a burden to the town because it is already library money set aside.

Lee Gustafson pointed out that 70%, \$78,000, of the library's budget comes from the town already and them asking for another \$1,000 seems like a bit of a reach due to the money they already have in accounts. He would like to leave the money where it is for emergencies because that is what it is intended for.

Ed Grossman will bring the Select Boards concerns to the Trustees at Monday's Meeting. He will make it known that the town is willing to give \$1,500, only if they match it.

Heather Chase made a motion to provide the library with \$1,000 from Architectural Services and \$500 from Library Expense, in the case that the Library Board of Trustees agree to match the total amount. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. Lee Gustafson voiced concern again, and wants to support the library, but feels that this is not the right way to do it.

The Select Board would like to address the relationship between the town and library at the next meeting to start assessing the situation. Julie Hance will ask Jim Carroll for his opinion on what can change between the library and the town. Arne Jonynas pointed out that there are different routes that can be taken to clarify things. Leigh Dakin suggested adding a line item to the budget for the library employee's health insurance possibly in the future.

The motion passed with one objection from Lee Gustafson.

### 3. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Leigh Dakin to adjourn. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Amie O'Brien  
Secretary of the Select Board

Lee Gustafson  
Clerk of the Select Board