

TOWN OF CHESTER
July 10, 2020
Select Board Meeting Minutes

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

VISITORS: Bob Parker; Deb de Winter

Meeting was held via Zoom and at the Town Hall.

1. CITIZEN COMMENTS/ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

No citizens comment.

2. SET TAX RATE

Arne Jonynas explained the packet sent to the Select Board included information showing trends and other factors used to set the tax rate. Last year, the increase in the 2020 tax rate was projected to be about \$0.06 or \$0.07. However, with the reappraisal dropping home values and other factors the amount increased by \$0.11. The Education Tax Rate was late and increased as well. The Education fund has a shortfall explaining some of the rate increase.

Lee Gustafson mentioned he would like to reduce expenses as the 2021 budget is being set and consider other ways to mitigate the tax increase. Julie Hance stated the 2021 budget will be streamlined as a zero-based budget. Department heads are looking at things that can be cut. They are considering ways to prolong equipment. With the surplus this year she would like to pay off some of the towns long term debt instead of reducing next year's tax rate. The auditor will be at the next meeting to help explain what can be done.

The State of Vermont sets the Education Tax Rate based on many different factors. Arne Jonynas thinks the system in setting the rate is very confusing. Lee Gustafson would like to know who to speak to about learning how the state sets the education rate. Julie Hance will find out and possibly set up a training session for the Select Board.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to set the Non-Residential Town Tax Rate to \$2.3585 and the Residential Town Tax Rate to \$2.2308. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

3. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 a.m.

Amie O'Brien
Secretary of the Select Board

Lee Gustafson
Clerk of the Select Board