

TOWN OF CHESTER  
SELECT BOARD  
January 6, 2021  
Select Board Meeting Minutes

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

VISITORS: SapaTV; Scott MacDonald; Shawn Cunningham; Steve Mancuso; Scott Blair

***Meeting was held via Zoom and at the Town Hall.***

1. APPROVE MINUTES FROM December 16, 2020 SELECT BOARD MEETING

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the Minutes of the December 16, 2020 Select Board meeting as written. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The motion passed.

The Yosemite Firehouse had clap boards replaced which were then painted, not the whole building. There will be four 1,000-gallon propane tanks at the Public Services Building, not gallon/pound. On page two the last paragraph says font which should be front.

The Water/Wastewater Commissioners Meeting Minutes from December 16, 2020 will be approved at the next meeting.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS/ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Steve Mancuso spoke about the Jeffrey Barn. He has thoughts and ideas on how to save the building from being torn down. There are other people from the community that have suggestions as well. Julie Hance will meet with him to discuss this further and it will be added to the January 20, 2021 Agenda.

The Chester Rotary is giving up managing the Fall Festival after many years of coordinating the event. Scott MacDonald and Scott Blair intend to organize the event and find others to help. They would like to have the festival feel more like a county fair by working with the Legion and using their field for different types of vendors. They will update the Select Board regarding the progress of the festival.

The Select Board received a letter from a resident regarding lowering the speed limits on town roads. He would like to keep the speed limits the same or raise them.

### 3. OLD BUSINESS

Academy Roof: The town was awarded the Historic Preservation Grant for replacement of the west side of the roof. Julie Hance is working on getting a second cost estimate. This will be the last of the exterior work needed before work on the interior can be considered.

Academy Ceiling: A claim has been submitted to the insurance company to pay for the damaged ceiling.

Public Safety Building: The framework is up, and the floors are being poured. Work on the interior will be starting soon. The project is still about a week behind and the contingency fund is holding at about \$90,000.

Gravel Project: An agreement has been reached with the Natural Resources Board. There should not be any additional hearings concerning the project. The permit should be approved soon.

Police Department: Trevor Whipple is almost done reviewing the policies and procedures for the department. Julie Hance met with Jim Carroll to discuss the community oversight committee. He has some ideas that could make the committee work for Chester. The Citizens Complaint Brochure and Complaint Form are now available on the website.

Local Government Reimbursement Grant: Everything submitted for reimbursement has been approved, including 100% of the sound system and acoustics panels. The panels will be added to only the ceiling in large groups and the shades will be acoustical shades, not curtains. More can be added over time as needed. Eventually, the regular meetings will be downstairs in the front room of Town Hall, so upstairs needs to be designed for larger events. The hanging contributions from the Historical Society are almost ready. Wright Construction will hang everything when the time comes. This will hopefully be done by Town Meeting.

Julie Hance will check with Chief Rick Cloud to find out if speeds on Andover Road are being monitored.

### 4. APPOINT ZONING ADMINISTRATOR AS SALVAGE YARD ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

A motion was made by Heather Chase to appoint the Zoning Administrator as the Salvage Yard Ordinance Officer. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The motion passed.

### 5. TOWN MEETING; AUSTRALIAN BALLOT OR MOVE TOWN MEETING DATE

The Select Board discussed either changing the date of Town Meeting or to vote all articles by Australian Ballot. If the meeting date were to be changed it would be moved to early May to ensure the tax rate can be set by the beginning of July. COVID restrictions might still be in place in May making it so the articles would have to be voted by Australian Ballot anyway.

The board decided to keep the date of Town Meeting as the first Monday in March and to vote all articles by Australian Ballot the following day. The meeting will be done by Zoom with a PowerPoint presentation of the budget like usual. Organizations asking for appropriations will be encouraged to attend the meeting through Zoom to speak about their association. This change will be advertised to ensure voters are fully aware before the meeting takes place. The Town Report will be available online along with all other information pertaining to meeting day.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to have an informational meeting on the normal date in March and to vote all articles by Australian Ballot. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

6. 2021 CAPITAL PLAN REVIEW

The Capital Plan and Bond Plan have been combined into one document. Items are broken down by department and only include anticipated purchases for 2021. There is a new truck for the Highway Department, a new police cruiser, the match for the sidewalk project, and signage in the plan for 2020. The Select Board will have to decide where to apply the surplus in the General Fund. Capital Fund payments will be increasing over the next few years. The surplus could be used to pay off debt or to purchase new items. The Reserve Fund will need to be funded after the voters approve the plan. This will be on the January 20, 2021 Agenda. Lee Gustafson asked for two more columns to be added to the document, one showing total cost and the other showing how long the payoff will take. The Fire Department's turnout gear will be taken out of the Capital Fund and adding to their budget. The interest on the Public Safety Building is already being paid and payments on the principle will hit the loan in 2024. The one-time expenditures for the Public Safety Building will be added to its own line item.

7. 2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET REVIEW

The Highway Department surplus number has not been finalized yet. The surplus amount must stay with the department and could be used to reduce the amount of money needed for 2021. Or, the savings could be used towards paving or the new truck being purchased in 2021. The Land Use amount collected from the state is calculated by the state and is based on Land Use property values. Some line items are blank as they have been added to other places or are no longer needed. These must show on the budget for 2 years and then can drop off. Perpetual Care for the Cemetery Department is funded when lots are paid for. This process for the budget could be changed and Julie Hance will talk to Jeff Sheldon about it. The line for NEMRC is zero because the number has not been approved by the voters. This number will be added after the budget passes. The cell phone savings by switching carriers is a big number. The numbers for sand and gravel will go down in 2022 because the gravel pit will be operational. The amount paid to Springfield for use of the Transfer Station will be discussed when they have a new Town Manager, along with other concerns. The Select Board decided to keep the \$10,000 for Marketing under Revitalization. Julie Hance has not received the heat estimate for the new Public Safety building. The 2021 budget has not

increased. Arne Jonynas thanked all involved in building the budget including Julie Hance, Cil Mathews, and the department heads.

8. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA

The Water/Wastewater Commissioners Meeting Minutes from December 16, 2020 will be approved at the next meeting. Steve Mancuso, Ron Patch, and other community members would like to see the Jeffrey Barn fixed up. They feel the structure does not need to be restored so people can enter the building, just so it does not need to be torn down. The insurance company will only cover the barn for debris removal if the structure falls. Also, there is liability insurance if someone one gets hurt at the barn. Chester Community Greenhouse is still searching for locations and will update the board at the next meeting. Brookside Cemetery bridge is going up in 2021. The groundwork for expanding the cemetery has been completed and will need to be discussed again. The bylaw changes proposed by the Planning Commission will be presented to the board in sections. The document is being readdressed with new members and there have been a lot of changes. The community oversight board to the Police Department will be on an Agenda in February.

9. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Jeff Holden. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Amie O'Brien  
Secretary of the Select Board

Lee Gustafson  
Clerk of the Select Board