

TOWN OF CHESTER
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

December 19, 2018
Minutes

PRESENT: Arne Jonynas; Heather Chase; Ben Whalen; Dan Cote; Lee Gustafson;
David Pisha

VISITORS: Julie Hance, Wanda Purdy; Shawn Cunningham; William Lindsay; Kathy
Pellett; Barre Pinsky

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Jonynas.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2018
Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Dan Cote. The motion passed.

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

There were no citizen's comments.

3. CHESTER LIBRARY UPDATE:

Kathy Pellett was present from the Library to discuss the Library budget. Kathy Pellett
stated that she is here to make the library's formal request in the amount of \$75,000.00.
She did not have a copy of the proposed budget but will get it to the Town Manager next
week.

Kathy Pellett provided a summation of the library activities and offerings to the
community. There is a lot of computer use at the library as well as home deliveries.
They also work with other organizations in the community and other libraries.

The total library budget for 2019 is \$104,700.00 as compared to \$101,900 in 2018 and
\$104,695 in 2017. One position was cut after an employee left. A new youth services
employee has been added with an increased salary. They interviewed over 30 local
people for the position and have selected a lady from New York who is relocating to
Vermont.

Dan Cote thanked Kathy Pellett for the home delivery service that the library offers.
Arne Jonynas thanked the Library Board for their work on running the library and
expressed its importance to the community.

4. DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER APPOINTMENT:

David Pisha stated that Amanda Silva works for the Ambulance Department. She is helping the Health Officer but officially needs to be appointed as a Deputy Health Officer before she can attend trainings.

A motion was made by Dan Cote to appoint Amanda Silva to the position of Deputy Health Officer for a period beginning January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2022. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

5. DOG COMPLAINT:

Arne Jonynas stated that a complaint has been issued by Ruth Zezza regarding a dog that keeps getting loose that she keeps bringing to the pound.

Julie Hance stated that Ruth Zezza specifically requested that this item be brought before the Selectboard. The Board asked David Pisha to follow up with the Police Chief as well as Ruth Zezza regarding the process that needs to be followed.

6. CYPRUS MINERALS FUND EXPENDITURE:

Arne Jonynas stated that the Board has been provided with a history of the Cyprus Minerals money. The Board does have the authority to spend the money. It can bring this decision before the voters if it so chooses.

The Board has discussed spending approximately \$46,000 to complete a 50% design for the EMS Building. This is needed to obtain an accurate cost estimate for the work to be done. David Pisha stated that Centerline will need 12-15 weeks to complete the design which means no bond vote in the spring. A bond vote would not be able to happen until Fall.

Heather Chase questioned how the Board feels about borrowing from Cyprus and paying back, or just withdrawing from the fund. The Board discussed options available such as taking the money and not paying back or paying it back within the budget. Lee Gustafson also suggested drawing the full balance and investing as a reserve fund for the town. Dan Cote agreed. Ben Whalen expressed his concerns about not tying the money up from being used. The Board agreed to discuss the Reserve Fund at the next meeting.

7. APPROVAL OF 50% DESIGN FUNDNG:

The plans are being prepared by Centerline Architects. Shawn Cunningham questioned if we are specifically contracting with the Architect or the Contractor for the drawings. Lee Gustafson stated that there are 4 costs to 4 different companies with a total of the \$46,950.00. The Board discussed how the Contract will run and who will be the contract manager. The Board agreed that the expenditure of the money is not the issue, but the flow of the contract is an issue.

Bill Lindsay questioned why the town is not looking at a design/build. David Pisha and Lee Gustafson explained that Russell Construction no longer performs design/build services. Russell was used because they had performed the previous work and already had the intellectual property, thereby creating a less expensive project. Once the Board obtains voter approval for the bond, another \$46,950 will be spent to finalize the drawings and a bid process will be used for the construction bids.

The Board asked David Pisha to reach out to Centerline and the other contractors about the process that is recommended. Before any expense is paid, an approved Contract will need to be obtained and signed.

A motion was made by Dan Cote to approve the expenditure of \$46,950.00 from the Cyprus Mineral Funds for the purchase of 50% design plans for the new EMS building. Seconded by Ben Whalen. The motion passed with Heather Chase voting in the negative.

The Board stated that they would be approving the money, not spending the money. They further clarified that there needs to be a contract signed first. Heather Chase stated that she wants to make sure that there is ownership of the documents once they are paid for. Dan Cote stated that he is not in favor of the Town Manager managing the 4 contracts and wants one Contractor managing those contracts.

David Pisha will contact Russell Construction to find out how the contract management will work with the 4 contractors.

Bill Lindsay expressed his opinion that there be one person in charge on a project this size.

8. PRELIMINARY DRAFT GENERAL FUND BUDGET:

David Pisha stated that revenues have been accounted for, the final payroll has been logged, as well as an additional warrant. The amount to be raised in taxes \$99,000. Once the last warrant has been logged, that amount will increase to approximately \$160,000. David Pisha noted that this is primarily due to no highway surplus. There were also onetime revenues received in 2018 that will not be received in 2019.

David Pisha also explained that delinquent tax collections are not accounted for in the same way since we are now on the accrual method. He further explained that the town is allowed to account for revenue received for the first 2 months of 2019 which can help offset this increase.

David Pisha discussed the option of lowering the sand and gravel budgets since the town is proceeding with the gravel extraction operation. Arne Jonynas expressed his concerns that this could backfire. Heather Chase stated that she feels like it is too much of a risk.

The Board discussed the increase of approximately \$160,000. It was agreed that they will need to review costs to determine what can be removed from the budget. Dan Cote

mentioned the possibility of lowering the fuel line in Highway by \$20,000 due to fluctuating costs.

Lee Gustafson suggested that the Board ask department heads to reduce their budget by a certain percentage. The Board discussed options of how to achieve a reduced budget. The Board agreed to have David review the budget with the department heads and determine how much can be cut.

Lee Gustafson stated that he will agree to forego his Selectman's salary for 2019.

Bill Lindsay suggested that the Board also review the Capital Plan and see if there are cuts that can be made there as well.

9. ROUTE 35 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:

Julie Hance explained that Route 35 has now reached a point where it is in severe condition. She informed the Board that the cost to repair the worst section which is approximately 2300 feet will cost \$2 million. She stated that there is a Predisaster Mitigation Grant that she is requesting to apply for. The match would be \$500,000.

The Board discussed the need to do something with Route 35. Discussion ensued regarding Route 35 being a town road and not a state road. The Board asked Julie to investigate the process for changing the classification of Route 35.

The Board approved Julie Hance submitting the application for the Predisaster Mitigation Grant in the amount of \$2 million.

10. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA:

The Selectboard agreed that the next agenda should include the EMS building, Reserve Fund, and Budget.

Julie Hance will check with Michael Normyle regarding the status of the Sunoco project. Julie Hance will also check the balance in the Grant Fund.

Julie Hance explained that policy review will begin in February 2019. Financial Policy should include donation language. Arne Jonynas also mentioned that he has received comments that the town does not have a policy on how to file a complaint against a specific department.

11. ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Dan Cote. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Julie Hance
Secretary of the Select Board

Ben Whalen
Clerk of the Selectboard