

TOWN OF CHESTER
WATER/SEWER COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
December 4, 2019
Minutes

PRESENT: Arne Jonynas; Heather Chase; Ben Whalen; Lee Gustafson; Leigh Dakin;
David Pisha

VISITORS: Shawn Cunningham; Sharon Huntley; Julie Hance; Jeff Holden; Richard
Cloud; Frank Bidwell; Cynthia Prairie; Matt Wilson; Wanda Purdy;
William Lindsay; Dan Cook; Kirby Putnam

1. WATER BUDGET REVIEW:

David Pisha stated that the budget for Water is very similar to that of last year. Expenditures are up slightly but is following a stable financial path.

Arne Jonynas questioned any need to further increase the water rate. David Pisha noted that the town has achieved the rate that is required by the State and no further increase is anticipated at this time.

Leigh Dakin questioned the "collection system" line. Jeff Holden stated that this line is for miscellaneous parts that are used during the year. This should be named distribution system which would be a better description.

Heather Chase questioned the Contract Service Reimbursement line. David Pisha noted that this is the water project that will be mostly reimbursed.

Jeff Holden discussed the need for a generator for the well site. The existing generator is not large enough to run the well and has now been slated for Town Hall. Julie Hance will be looking for grant funding. Jeff Holden stated that he may be looking for a propane generator. The estimate received was \$100,000 but he is hoping to cut the cost back. He is also talking with companies about used generators. Jeff Holden stated that it is a requirement coming from the State. However, they have not given a completion date. Jeff Holden stated that he put \$10,000 in the budget to start the concrete pad that would be required, awaiting potential grant awards.

2. SEWER BUDGET REVIEW:

David Pisha stated that revenues are projected to be up slightly. Expenditures are up slightly as well but are following a stable financial path.

Arne Jonynas questioned the length of time remaining on the sewer bond. David Pisha stated that he estimates approximately 10 years. Arne Jonynas also questioned any need to further increase rates which David Pisha noted would not be necessary at this time.

Jeff Holden stated that the sewer budget includes a jetty trailer that can be used for high pressure flushing which will help alleviate the need for a flushing truck each year. The cost is \$12,000.00. This can also be used to suck out the pumps which will help keep things operating at a higher capacity.

3. ADJOURN:

A motion was made Heather Chase to adjourn. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

TOWN OF CHESTER
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Cloud; Frank Bidwell; Cynthia Prairie; Matt Wilson; Wanda Purdy;
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There were no additions or deletions to this agenda.

1. APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Ben Whalen to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2019 Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

Wanda Purdy addressed the Board regarding the transfer station in Springfield. She obtained information from Town Hall indicating that there are 287 households in Chester using the Transfer Station. The Town of Chester pays \$40,000 to the Town of Springfield, users have to pay \$25.00 for the sticker to access the transfer station, as well as \$15.00 for a punch card. Wanda Purdy indicated that Grafton and Andover also use the transfer station but the towns are not paying anything to Springfield. She indicated that she feels Chester residents are being ripped off. Heather Chase clarified that the 287 is only what was sold in Chester.

Leigh Dakin suggested that a representative from Springfield attend a future meeting. Ben Whalen stated that Derek Suursoo talked with the Board about this in the past. He had indicated that the Solid Waste District was losing money for many reasons. He agreed that there should be further discussion with Springfield about the system and the money that Chester is paying. Also, the cost per year should be renegotiated.

Frank Bidwell stated that he has been to the Transfer Station and witnessed people being told to leave because they didn't have a sticker. Ben Whalen suggested that this would be a good discussion for Springfield.

3. OLD BUSINESS:

Economic Development: David Pisha stated that he is meeting with the Chamber of Commerce tomorrow to discuss events and procedures that can be used for any event that is coming to the area.

EMS Building: David Pisha stated that the architect has met with the departments to assess the space that is being used in each department and to determine precisely what is needed. The architect is also working with the Zoning Department on the Conditional Use Permit that will be required. There is a conference call scheduled for next week. The goal is a January 20 DRB hearing date.

Gravel Project: David Pisha stated that Jim Goss has received the DRB permit and will be submitting the ACT 250 application in the next few days. Arne Jonynas requested that the Board get a timeline once the permit has been submitted.

Leigh Dakin questioned the status of the plaster for the Academy Building. David Pisha stated that he has spoken with Meg Campbell who suggested that the town have the attic reviewed to assess the condition of the ceiling as a whole.

Leigh Dakin questioned why the Information Booth is going to be opened for another season and not using the Academy Building bathrooms instead. Jeff Holden stated that one of the bathrooms is not in service and that there is money would be needed to fix up the bathrooms. Ben Whalen stated that there is an intention to use the Academy Building in future but feels that the building will not be ready for this coming year. There are security issues, plaster repairs needed, bathroom repairs needed. The Board agreed that the review of the lease would be on a January agenda.

Leigh Dakin questioned the status of the tomb door at North Street. David Pisha contacted Hugh Henry and has not heard back.

Arne Jonynas questioned the status of finding an individual to hang photos. David Pisha stated that he is waiting to hear.

Arne Jonynas questioned the status of the letter to Vermont Furniture Hardwood. David Pisha stated that he has not written it yet but will get it ready for the next meeting.

David Pisha confirmed that the Jiffy Mart real estate contract is up in March and will begin negotiations at that time.

Arne Jonynas read the letter received from the State of Vermont regarding the request to reduce the speed limit by the High School. This letter indicates that the State is not anticipating a speed change. There is a meeting at 1:00 on December 11 which Leigh Dakin and Arne Jonynas would like to attend via telephone. Shawn Cunningham suggested that the town speak with Londonderry because they went through a similar process. Julie Hance will talk with the High School about their attendance as well.

Arne Jonynas read the letter received from the State of Vermont regarding the request to eliminate parking along Route 103 near Jiffy Mart. This letter seems to address the concerns of the Selectboard. Further questions could be asked at the December 11 telephone conference. The recommended signs have now been installed.

4. PERMISSION TO USE TOWN PROPERTY:

Cynthia Prairie was present to discuss the Cookie Tour. This year the tour will include the Stone Village. She is requesting use of the town property across from David's house, at the corner of First Avenue and Route 103. They would use the property for parking and are requesting that the town plow the lot.

A motion was made by Heather Chase to authorize the use of the Town property for parking for the Cookie Tour and to work with the Highway Department regarding the plowing. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

5. GENERAL FUND BUDGET & CAPITAL PLAN REVIEW:

David Pisha stated that the budget is up \$143,000 which is less than last year. However, there are still expenses and revenues that will be received. This is down from over \$300,000 presented at the last meeting.

General Government Revenue. This is not slated for any major changes. Penalties and Interest were decreased because taxes are collected at an improved rate. Overall, revenues are down \$8,000.00. Other licenses should be decreased to \$1,000.00. The interest line will need to be reviewed since it is down. Clerk fees should be reviewed as well.

Administration. The Administration line is up a total of \$27,272.00. The board discussed the expense for the music license. It was suggested that the cost of this could be recouped from the groups that are holding music events. The Board would like further explanation of how the amount was arrived at.

Listers. This budget is down slightly.

Planning Zoning as well as Insurance expenses are down overall. Ben Whalen questioned why the Workers Compensation is broken out for Fire but not for other departments. The SRDC line was lowered back down to \$12,500.00 from \$15,000.00.

Police. Court fees have been lowered to be more realistic to what collections have been. The Ski revenue was increased to \$21,500.00. Other payroll is unpredictable and should be left at 15,000.00. Expenses are down \$6,000.00 overall. Richard Cloud stated that there was some equipment that was expected to be purchased this year but is being moved to 2020 due to the spending freeze.

Fire. Revenues are stable. David Pisha will check on Worker's Comp line. Without workers comp, expenses, the budget is up \$6,000.00. The Foam line is now up to \$5,000.00. This is because insurance companies are not required to pay invoices for foam so there is no offsetting revenue. Lee Gustafson questioned the uniform line in the budget which does not include turnout gear. Matt Wilson reviewed a few line items that have been spent but are not showing on the budget yet. In addition, the physical are now being done elsewhere at a cheaper cost.

Heather Chase questioned the donations being received and the process that is being used. She would like a Donation Policy established that helps track the flow of money. Discussion ensued regarding cash donations verses equipment donation. David Pisha will confirm with the Auditor the process that should be used by the town when receiving donations.

Matt Wilson informed the Selectboard that the firemen have foregone their annual increase as a thank you to the residents for the new building.

Ambulance. Revenues are neutral. Overall expenses are down \$4,800.00. Dan Cook noted that calls are down compared to last year. Lee Gustafson questioned the training line. Dan Cook stated that this line is never known ahead of time. It depends on the annual conference, who is taking the EMT course and who he has that needs training. There is a \$2,000 bill that has not yet been received for 2 individuals participating in an EMT Course. Lee Gustafson also questioned the equipment line which is showing an increase. Dan Cook confirmed that this is due to the purchase of tactical gear for ambulance personnel.

Heather Chase questioned the status of billing Andover for fire and ambulance. Dan Cook suggested increasing the ambulance portion to \$8,500.00 from \$6,000.00. This is based on per capita. Heather Chase stated that she would like to review the history of Andover's increases. She would like there to be a discussion with the Andover Selectboard.

Communications. David Pisha stated that the tower rent is down. He indicated that there is a company who would like to talk with the Board about buying out the towns' tower contracts. The Board asked David Pisha to gather more information and have at a future agenda item as an Executive Session.

Public Works. There is a deficit of \$90,000 at this time. This is the result of mud season and winter in early 2019 and the depletion of all sand/gravel piles. Overall increase in expenses is \$128,000. Lee Gustafson questioned the street lights line which is not showing as expended. Ben Whalen questioned the calcium chloride line. Kirby Putnam requested that this line remain. He did not spend this line because he knew the budget was over and was trying to keep costs down. The water line should be reviewed as well as it is only showing half spent. Contracted labor was increased because of the logging of the gravel land. However, a gravel pit line has been added. David Pisha and Kirby Putnam will review these lines as this could be doubled. Heather Chase asked that this cost be added to the total costs that the Board was given. The rip rap line is there in case there is flooding.

Kirby Putnam mentioned the value of the compaction roller this year. He noted that the grading lasted much longer this year due to compaction. Arne Jonynas questioned the status of Lovers Lane with the logging that is taking place. Kirby Putnam indicated that it isn't horrible but that he will likely be speaking with the property owner. He intends to ask them to put on their chains on closer to their property and not at the beginning of the road.

Recreation. Recreation expenses are showing up \$7,000. Matt McCarthy will be at the next meeting to answer questions. Julie Hance will check with Cil on the payroll line. The utilities and water lines in Facilities need to be reviewed.

Parks & Cemeteries. Overall expenses are down \$1,100.00. There should be something added to the power on the green line. Jeff Sheldon will be at the next meeting.

Library. Kathy Pellett will be at the next meeting but is currently showing an increase of \$3,500.00. Utilities line is up due to air conditioning.

Revitalization. /The Miscellaneous Maintenance has been increased. The information booth expenses have been added. David Pisha discussed the request from Chester Townscape for assistance with watering the bridge boxes. He suggested the addition of a seasonal employee that would perform this service and float amongst all departments to provide part time help. The Board agreed to have David Pisha find the money for each department.

Capital Plan. David Pisha explained that the dump truck and cruiser are still scheduled to be purchased but have been moved into a loan program. Dump trucks would be paid over 5 years and cruisers over 4 years. The EMS building has been budgeted at only \$45,000 in 2020 but will be double that amount beginning in 2021. David Pisha is proposing that the difference be taken from Cyprus Minerals or the Economic Development Fund to lessen the burden until the Bond Plan begins to catch up with itself. Lee Gustafson questioned the cost of the loans verses purchasing outright for the equipment. David Pisha will work out the interest expenses at a rate of 3.25%.

Discussion ensued regarding the replacement cycle for the cruiser and the dump trucks.

Heather Chase requested that the Cyprus Minerals history be provided for the next meeting.

Matt Wilson also stated that the utility truck for fire will need to be replaced in the coming years. He also mentioned the tanker will need to be replaced in the future.

Bond Plan. The EMS bond has been added to the bond plan. No other bonds are planned for this year.

6. EMERGENCY SERVICES BUILDING LETTER OF INTENT:

Arne Jonynas confirmed that Jim Carroll has reviewed the Letter of Intent and proposal.

A motion was made by Heather Chase to authorize David Pisha to sign the Letter of Intent with Russell Construction. Seconded by Ben Whalen. The motion passed.

7. EMERGENCY SERVICES BUILDING FINANCING:

David Pisha stated that he is proposing interest only payments for 2020, 2021 ad 2022. November of 2023 will be the start of principal payments. He shared the amortization from the Bond Bank. The bond application is due December 13. David Pisha stated that there is the option of a May bond application which will require a Bond Anticipation Note. The Board agreed to a December bond application.

Bill Lindsay questioned if there will be Performance Bonds issued during construction. Julie Hance confirmed that the construction manager would make sure that the appropriate bonds were received.

8. TOWN MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION:

Arne Jonynas explained that the Town Manager Search committee asked for some minor revisions to the job descriptions for the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager.

A motion was made by Ben Whalen to approve the revisions to the job descriptions for the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager. Seconded by Leigh Dakin. The motion passed.

9. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA:

The Selectboard signed a Cemetery Deed.

The Selectboard agreed that the next agenda will include the budget, the history of Cyprus Minerals and information from the Auditor on a Donation Policy.

The Board also reminded David Pisha to set up a teleconference with VTrans at 1:00 on December 11.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION; TOWN MANAGER

A motion was made by Leigh Dakin to enter Executive Session for the purpose of follow up to review of Town Manager. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

The Board entered Executive Session at 9:39 p.m.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to exit Executive Session at 9:57 pm. Seconded by Ben Whalen. The motion passed.

11. ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Ben Whalen to adjourn. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Julie Hance
Secretary of the Select Board

Ben Whalen
Clerk of the Selectboard