

TOWN OF CHESTER  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING

July 2, 2019  
Minutes

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

VISITORS: Julie Hance; Shawn Cunningham; Debbie Aldrich; Pat Budnick; Derek Suursoo

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Arne Jonynas. There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

1. APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2019 Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Heather Chase. Motion passed.

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

There were no citizen's comments.

3. OLD BUSINESS:

Chamber of Commerce: David Pisha stated that he went to the Chamber's annual luncheon. He heard a speaker discussing recreational opportunities throughout the State. There may be some incentive opportunities available in the future.

EMS Building: David Pisha stated that the committee has been working with the architect. Lee Gustafson stated that the architect is working with others relative to the site placement of the building. It is anticipated that there will need to be an enlarged curb cut required from the State of Vermont.

Gravel Project: RSG is working on the Sound Study. Jim Goss is hoping to have their reports next week with an application being submitted soon after that. Heather Chase reminded David Pisha that she wants to see the ACT 250 application prior to Jim Goss submitting it. David Pisha cautioned the Board to filter any questions through him.

High School speed limit issue: David Pisha provided the Board with a copy of the initial study of the speed limit concerns on Route 103 near the High School. There is a recommendation that the Selectboard send a letter requesting a speed study on this section of roadway with the idea of creating this as a school speed zone.

4. REQUEST FOR USE OF TOWN PROPERTY:

Pat Budnick stated that she will be hosting the Chocolate Festival which is typically held in Landgrove. She indicated that there will be an issue with parking for this event. She is requesting to use the former McNally property across the street for overflow parking. The event will be held on August 5 from 5-8 p.m. David Pisha questioned if the event will provide an insurance certificate. Pat Budnick will find out. Arne Jonynas also suggested that there be a barricade along the river to prevent cars from backing over the bank.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to allow Pat Budnick to use the town property, old McNally property, on August 5, 2019 for overflow parking. Seconded by Ben Whalen. The Motion passed.

5. INFORMATION BOOTH SEWER CONNECTION:

Jeff Holden was present to discuss the sewer connection to the information booth. He recommended a pump set up instead of a gravity system. However, he does not feel that an elaborate system is needed. Jeff Holden indicated that any type of gravity system will kill the trees in front of the Academy Building.

Jeff Holden feels that the needs are somewhere between a double pump system and a gravity system. Since it will only be serving the Information Booth, he feels that only one pump will be necessary. This will require only a 2" line instead of a 4" line which will be less intrusive to the trees.

David Pisha indicated that if Economic Development money were used, the project could begin soon. Heather Chase stated that the solutions are not clear for her and she would like more discussion. The Board discussed that the reason for connection is due to the frequency of pumping as well as wanting to have the information booth open during large events in town. Ben Whalen stated that he would like to know the costs for Jeff's suggestion. Also, the cost of horizontal drilling should be determined.

6. RESERVE ACCOUNT FOR RECORDING FEES:

Deborah Aldrich stated that recording fees in the State of Vermont have increased from \$10.00 per page to \$15.00 per page. The State is requiring that a minimum of \$4.00 be set aside for the purposes of preservation/restoration type activities for vaulted items. Debbie Aldrich stated that there is currently a line item for restoration in the budget. She is requesting that line to remain until she can determine how much money is raised through recording fees.

Debbie Aldrich explained the digitizing that has taken place to date, as well as book restoration that has been done.

Debbie Aldrich explained to the Board that there has been a substantial change to birth and death records. In the State of Vermont, proof as to relationship is required prior to obtaining certified copies.

7. TRANSFER STATION UPDATE:

Lee Gustafson and David Pisha met with the Springfield Town Manager regarding the changes to the transfer station. Lee Gustafson provided an update on that meeting. He stated that the Town of Springfield has been losing approximately \$97,000 per year on the transfer station. This is due to changes in the recycling laws. The transfer station stickers are a means to generate revenue to offset this loss. Lee Gustafson stated that there is a profit & Loss on the website that shows the history. This change will put Springfield to a positive of \$30,000. Lee Gustafson stated that the new system will move the expenses more towards the user.

Ben Whalen stated that Derek Suursoo has been informing the Board for a couple of years. He is not surprised by this change.

Derek Suursoo questioned if there was discussion relative to other towns paying an annual fee. Lee Gustafson stated that Chester is the only town that contributes through their taxes. Discussion ensued regarding the equity of the situation. If there was an assessment to other communities based on population, this would generate further income to the Springfield. The Board discussed having a better assessment of where trash is coming from.

Derek Suursoo agreed with Lee Gustafson about the consumer paying attention to the packaging of the products that they are buying.

8. CHARGING STATION GRANT AWARD:

Lee Gustafson stated that he has withdrawn his bid for this project.

Heather Chase stated that this is a reminder about the necessity of bidding. Julie Hance stated that most projects, all that are grant funded, are put out to bid.

Lee Gustafson stated that the reason for the issue is because the individuals awarding the bid are employees of the bidder. The town's attorney advised that Selectboard members not bid on town projects due to the issue that it creates. The Board discussed this topic.

Heather Chase stated that her issue is that there be complete transparency. She expressed concerns regarding a potential disadvantage by not allowing Board members to bid.

9. TOWN PLAN REVIEW:

Lee Gustafson feels that this chapter puts forth more information than what is needed in the Town Plan. He would like to have more information about the purpose of this

chapter and how this information came to be. A suggestion was made to have the Planning Commission attend a meeting to discuss this chapter and its back story. Heather Chase suggested that Regional Planning attend as well. The second meeting in August would be the best time for the Board. Lee Gustafson also suggested that there be a special meeting dedicated to just this topic should the Board decide to keep this language.

10. SET TAX RATE:

David Pisha provided a summary of the tax rates over the past 4 years. The residential rate is up about a penny. The nonresidential rate is up approximately 4 cents.

A motion was made by Ben Whalen to set the municipal rate at \$ .7403, the local agreement rate at \$ .0048 for a total Residential Tax Rate of \$1.9626 and the Non Residential Tax Rate of \$2.099. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

11. REQUEST TO CATER LICENSE:

Arne Jonynas stated that the Stone Hearth will be catering the Chocolate Festival at the Motel in the Meadow on August 5, 2019.

12. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA:

Lee Gustafson stated that he would like to schedule a walk thru of the Academy Building. The Board would like to do this walk thru as a group. Arne Jonynas stated that Harry Goodell has asked to attend this visit. The Board set this walk thru for August 21, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. The Board will meet at the Academy building.

The Highway Safety Audit Review should be on a future agenda. He also stated that he would like the Board to discuss the potential of prohibiting marijuana sales in the State of Vermont. This would not include CBD products. Lee Gustafson also stated that he would like to discuss the future of the solar field.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION; REVIEW TOWN MANAGER'S CONTRACT:

A motion was made by Heather Chase to enter Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing the Town Manager's contract. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:14 p.m.

A motion was made by Ben Whalen to exit Executive Session at 8:57 p.m. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

14. ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Ben Whalen. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Julie Hance  
Secretary of the Select Board

Ben Whalen  
Clerk of the Selectboard