

TOWN OF CHESTER  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

November 28, 2018  
Minutes

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

VISITORS: Julie Hance; Frederick Greenwell; Shawn Cunningham; Gary King; Dan Cook

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 November 7, 2018 Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

Frederick Greenwell was present as a follow up to his Tax Abatement letter. He read his letter which is attached to these minutes.

Arne Jonynas stated that David Pisha will do the homework necessary to determine what the Board can do to address this issue. This will be an item on the next agenda. The Board acknowledged that there is a December 31 deadline.

David Pisha commended Public Works on their efforts during this last storm.

3. OLD BUSINESS:

David Pisha stated that he is part of the Chamber of Commerce Marketing committee. They are meeting to discuss marketing ideas for the region.

4. CHARGING STATION GRANT:

Julie Hance explained that she is seeking approval to apply for a grant to install 2 charging stations in the parking area at Cobleigh Field. These stations will charge 4 vehicles at once. She explained that the charging would be free for the first year. After that the Board can decide if they want to start charging for the electricity. The stations will come with the equipment needed to bill users. The total project is \$34,000 with the town matching \$9,000.

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to approve and sign the Resolution for the Charging Station Grant. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed.

5. EMS BUILDING/TOWN GARAGE PRESENTATION:

Lee Gustafson stated that at the next meeting he will give a formal presentation to the Selectboard regarding the new EMS Building and Town Garage upgrade. He stated that they are working out a 50% bid package which will be part of the presentation. The committee will be looking for approval from the Board to proceed. They are anticipating proceeding to a bond vote in March.

Lee Gustafson stated that they are expecting to present one bond to the voters. The Town Garage is in violation of many codes as well as the EMS Departments. This package will include a new building for Fire, Ambulance and Police located at the Pleasant Street property. This package will also include renovations to the Town Garage building, which will include a sprinkler system, new plumbing, new electrical, etc. This will also create space for all departments to keep all of their equipment under cover and operational.

The Board will have a formal presentation at the meeting on December 5. They encouraged people to get informed so that the bond vote will pass. The committee is also planning to host several meetings over the next few months to help inform the public. Gary King suggested holding an open house at the Town Garage building so that people can see what the needs truly are.

6. SIGN U.S. CELLULAR CONTRACT AMENDMENT:

David Pisha stated that this contract amendment is the final version which has been approved by Jim Carroll, U.S. Cellular as well as the Selectboard.

A motion was made by Heather Chase to sign the U.S. Cellular Contract Amendment. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Heather Chase to authorize David Pisha to sign the U.S. Cellular Contract Amendment. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

7. DRAFT BUDGET REVIEW:

General Government Revenue: David Pisha reported that penalties and interest have been reduced by \$10,000 as collections are being done more efficiently. The income from Sandri has been removed as well.

General Government Expenses: David Pisha reported that payroll is up slightly. Health premiums are up \$2400.00. Computer services have been raised but is not a finalized number yet. The town is taking a far more proactive approach to its computer security. David and Julie are getting quotes from a few companies to determine the best price. David Pisha stated that the tan interest has been lowered due to the new accounting system which allows for a better cash flow. A consulting line has been added as well. The website line of \$1,000 can be removed from Administration.

David Pisha stated that the listers and taxes budgets have little change. There was a question as to why the general expenses line is up. David Pisha will check with Wanda Purdy. David Pisha also noted that there is a calculation error in the taxes department.

Planning & Zoning. David Pisha stated that the Legal line has been decreased by \$5,000. Again, the computer line has been increased due to the change described earlier.

Insurance. David Pisha stated that the Co-insurance line has been raised. This number has been increased due to changing back to Blue Cross. The worker's compensation number will be double checked to keep in line with VLCT rates.

Police. David Pisha stated that the Court fees in the revenue line have been raised. Payroll is up slightly. Medical insurance is up by \$18,000 due to a change in plans from single to family with a couple of employees. The Equipment line is also up which includes additional radar signage.

Fire. David Pisha stated that the revenues for Fire are the same. The salary line has increased slightly. He stated that the physicals have been increased because they are now being done in Charlestown which is a higher cost. Heather Chase asked David Pisha to complain to the hospital about this increase as all clinics are owned by the same organization. Arne Jonynas stated that there are no expenses shown for 2018 in the physical category. David Pisha will follow up. Heather Chase also asked if the equipment line could be lowered. Lee Gustafson noted that the other income line should be reduced slightly. Arne Jonynas questioned the Andover contribution, which is supposed to escalate each year.

Ambulance. David Pisha stated that ambulance calls have increased, which is on the rise due to the clinic being closed. Dan Cook stated that there are 26 people that work for the ambulance, which includes himself and Amanda.

Highway. David Pisha stated that the revenues for Highway are down due to the prior year surplus number. This will be finalized as the year comes to an end. David Pisha stated that he will recalculate this number after tonight's warrant. Payroll and overtime are up slightly. The insurance line is down due to a change in premiums. Lee Gustafson questioned the cost of extracting sand and gravel. David noted that he does not want to budget a savings since we do not have permitting yet. He also stated that the towns supplier is retiring which is going to cause an increase in the price of gravel. The bond plan transfer line has been removed and is now included in the capital plan transfer so that one transfer is made. The budget is showing a \$20,000 increase in diesel/gasoline which David Pisha will check into and potentially keep this line flat.

Solid Waste. David Pisha has heard that the transfer station is increasing their line, although he has not heard this officially. David will check with Springfield. David Pisha will check into the Green-Up Day expenses which are up considerably over last year.

Recreation. David Pisha stated that revenues are relatively flat. Heather Chase stated that she would like to see some recreational opportunities for the older population. She suggested chair yoga or a walking club. Dan Cook stated that Amanda is working on this. The Board encouraged her to work with the recreation director as well. Gary King stated that the Conservation Committee hosts events as well and would like to collaborate more with the rec department. He also gave an update on the disc golf course which will be completed next year. Gary King mentioned that there is also a very active volley ball group in town that could use some expansion. David Pisha indicated that expenses are up slightly as well as the Winter Carnival line.

Facilities. David Pisha stated that Lifeguard expenses are up due to minimum wage. Facility repair is down since there have been upgrades done in 2018. The concession line is remaining at \$400 while Matt McCarthy is experimenting with the food truck. This budget will include the addition of a batting cage. Arne Jonynas questioned that there is no 2018 budget for vehicle expense.

Parks & Cemeteries. David Pisha stated that there is no increase in revenue. He will find out why the perpetual care line is negative. Expenses are relatively flat with the exception of insurance premiums.

Library. David Pisha stated that he has not seen a budget from the library yet.

Town Hall. David Pisha stated that the cleaning service line is down. We have changed services as a way to save money.

Revitalization. David Pisha stated that this department is flat.

Other Income/Expenses. David Pisha stated that these lines are flat as well.

The Board stated that they would like to review the Fund Balance Policy at the next meeting.

8. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA:

The Selectboard agreed to review the Fund Balance Policy at the next meeting. There will also be a presentation regarding the EMS building/Town Garage. The budget will be an agenda item as well.

9. ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Julie Hance  
Secretary of the Select Board

Ben Whalen  
Clerk of the Selectboard