

TOWN OF CHESTER
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

November 1, 2017
Minutes

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

VISITORS: Shawn Cunningham, Pat Budnick, Chris Meyer, Lyza Gardner, Derek Suursoo, Matt Wilson, Tory Denis, Richard Cloud, Jay Blodgett

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Jonynas. He then asked every one to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no deletions from the agenda. Arne Jonynas stated that he wanted to add New Business to the agenda.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Ben Whalen to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2017 Selectboard meeting as amended. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

Page 3, Item 4, advertise is misspelled.

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

There were no citizen's comments.

3. OLD BUSINESS:

Feasibility Study: David Pisha stated that an environmental firm has been hired to conduct the wetlands analysis at the town garage site. The cost is \$1,000.00. This may hold up the feasibility study, but is not anticipated. David Pisha responded to Lee Gustafson and stated that Claudio Veliz is anticipating a quick response. There are also grandfathering dates that may apply.

Assessor Position: David Pisha stated that Windsor has decided to go its own way. Chester is now advertising a part time position on its own.

Salvage Yard Ordinance: David Pisha stated that Jim Carroll and Jim Goss are working together on reviewing the subject properties and on creating an ordinance that would be effective in Chester. They will identify the pros and cons of this ordinance as well. Lee Gustafson questioned if the attorneys will identify other towns that are using the process and if they are effective. He expressed his desire to not be too harsh at the time of adoption but to allow some form of a grace period. It was suggested that Jim Carroll's comments be provided in writing first.

Arne Jonynas stated that the walk through on the Town Forest took place today. Bids are due on November 15 at 2:00. The Board agreed that they do not need to review the bids but advised David that if bids are close, they would prefer to use someone local. David Pisha advised that the bids would be awarded within a reasonable period of time likely a week.

Julie Hance explained that the phone system conversion is being put on hold for a year. The upfront cost is approximately \$10,000. The office is going to try the Vermont Alert system for this year and see if it works.

David Pisha stated that the new tractor with roadside mower and blower is here and is in operation.

David Pisha stated that Jim Goss is working with Naomi Johnson on the delineation of the boundaries for gravel extraction. This is one of the steps necessary to proceed with the ACT 250 application.

4. JACK COLEMAN MEMORIAL PLAQUE:

Chris Meyer was present with Pat Budnick to ask permission to install a memorial plaque on the gazebo on The Green in recognition of Jack Coleman. Jack Coleman was the original founder of the gazebo on The Green. He passed away in 2016. The cost of the plaque would be paid for by the Overture organization with no cost to the town.

A motion was made by Ben Whalen to allow the Overture Organization to place a plaque in honor of Jack Coleman in an appropriate location on The Green. Seconded by Lee Gustafson. The motion passed.

5. 911 ADDRESSES:

Matt Wilson, Fire Chief was present to discuss the need for adding 911 address signs to each property. He stated that he would like for the town to enact an ordinance indicating where the signs should be placed on the property. Matt Wilson also suggested that the town provide the signs and the posts necessary to install on each property. The estimated cost is approximately \$19,500 for the signage and \$6,700 for the brackets. The cost of the posts is not known at this time but would likely be a couple thousand.

Matt Wilson stated that he has spoken with the other emergency service departments. There is agreement that these are needed and will help these departments identify properties in the case of an emergency.

Dan Cote stated that he would like to do some research on this. Reflective 911 Signage is the topic to be searched. Matt Wilson also stated that Econo Signs has images on their website. Arne Jonynas suggested that this is not a one-size-fits-all. He is not sure that a

row of posts and signs on Main Street would be a good thing. Matt Wilson stated that he would like for the signs to be uniform for when other departments are covering Chester.

Dan Cote suggested that there be a series of options available for discussion purposes. He would like to discuss this when there is a full board. It was agreed that David Pisha will work with Matt Wilson and come up with a plan for a future discussion. Matt Wilson stated that Hyde Park has signage as well as Windham. Shawn Cunningham suggested that the ordinance mandate property owners to purchase a sign.

It was agreed that Matt Wilson will come back with a sample sign.

6. POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE:

Chief Cloud was present to provide an update on the Police Department. He stated that the radar signs are up and running. There has been a lot of positive feedback about the signs. They are finding that the speeds are dropping and have been very successful.

Chief Cloud reported that Dutch has finished his patrol class and will be fully certified in narcotics. In response to Dan Cote, Chief Cloud stated that Dutch is owned by him. The town outfitted a cruiser to accommodate Dutch and his training was free of charge with the exception of the Chief's time.

Chief Cloud stated that Dutch is certified in 7 drugs. He is also trained in officer protection, building searches and apprehensions. Dutch is trained in area search as well as scouting. Chief Cloud stated that Dutch currently can track 2 miles. All training has taken 12 weeks to date.

Ben Whalen questioned the number of uses in Chester. Chief Cloud stated that Dutch has been used in Chester 5 or 6 times. He will be used more now that the training has been completed. Drug Forfeiture money will start back up again soon now that the federal laws have been changed.

7. GENERAL FUND BUDGET REVIEW:

David Pisha reviewed the budget.

General Government: This department has not changed significantly. The Selectman's budget is up slightly due to the addition of social security being added to the budget. Administration is up due to salary increases and the addition of benefits within the department. Overall, the administration department has remained the same. A Revitalization Department has been added to the budget as well. The items of Wayfinding and Zoning Audit have been added but are offset by the Solid Waste transfer. David Pisha explained that the salary increase is based on the VLCT salary compensation. The Lister budget has been increased slightly due to a salary increase for the new position as well as the addition of benefits. Planning & Zoning has increased due to salary increases and more time allotted. In addition, the Planning Commission

compensation has been added. In addition, the SRDC contribution has been added to this department with an increase to \$10,000.00 from \$8,900.00. Insurance line items have been removed as they have been moved to the various departments. David Pisha stated that the town is anticipating moving health insurance companies from Blue Cross to MVP which will produce a \$40,000 savings. This will allow the employee coverage to remain the same. Arne Jonynas stated that he has heard from citizens about the town offering full insurance coverage to its employees. He would like to have the discussion of employee benefits at some point in the future. Arne Jonynas questioned the decrease in Worker's Compensation and Property/Casualty. David Pisha will check into this with the bookkeeper.

Public Safety: The Police revenue remains unchanged. The expenses remain unchanged, with the exception of the benefits being added and anticipated raises. The \$15,000 in the vehicles line is for vehicle maintenance. The cruiser purchase is reflected in the capital plan which will be discussed at the next meeting. The Fire Department has several changes. Ben Whalen recused himself from this conversation. The benefits lines have been added as well as the increase in equipment maintenance by \$5,000. The salary line has increased by \$10,000 as the Fire Chief is requesting that they be paid for their training. Arne Jonynas questioned if this is typical of other towns as well. Arne Jonynas indicated that he would rather spend a little money in this way than have to move to a full time service. The ambulance budget shows increased revenue in service fees. Salary increased as well as the addition of the benefits lines. Derek Suursoo questioned if the number of full time and part time positions could be added to the budget. In addition, Ben Whalen suggested that the full time salaries be separated from the part time salaries. David Pisha also indicated that he will sit down with Dan Cook to discuss the full time position. The Communications department has remained the same. It was also agreed that David Pisha will make notations about the major increases in each department. It is confusing to track the insurance lines now that benefits have been moved around.

Public Works: David Pisha stated that the largest issue in public works is the ending surplus which will change in the remaining 2 months. He reminded the Board that the public works surplus cannot be combined with the General Fund and has to remain with the highway department. He also stated there is additional state aid money to come in and there are transfers still to be made. David Pisha stated that the public works budget remains unchanged, with the exception of the benefit lines.

Solid Waste: David Pisha stated that the transfer station line will be increased to \$40,000 from \$35,000. Derek Suursoo stated that the increases are due to changes within China and their desire to use their own recyclables first. Derek Suursoo did suggest that the new number may be able to be negotiated.

Recreation: David Pisha indicated that revenues remain stable and unchanged. The expenses are increased due to benefits being moved. There are some final pool improvements that need to be made as well as the purchase of new bats. David Pisha will double check this budget to make sure that all expenses have been added.

Parks & Cemeteries: This budget again remains relatively unchanged, with the exception of benefits.

Town Hall: David Pisha stated this department is not showing much change, at this time. There does appear to be a discrepancy in the utilizes and fuel lines.

Other income: David Pisha stated that the school transfer has been projected. There are not many changes within this department.

Arne Jonynas asked that totals be added for the next meeting. David Pisha will add a summary page for the next meeting. Derek Suursoo questioned the Land Purchase line that is in Other Expenses.

Derek Suursoo stated that he would like to receive the budget via email in the future. He also stated that he may have interest in the budget committee. Arne Jonynas stated that he will add this to the next agenda.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

Dan Cote stated that he will not be at the next meeting. He is not sure of the ability to skype in.

9. ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Lee Gustafson to adjourn. Seconded by Dan Cote. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Julie Hance
Secretary of the Select Board

Ben Whalen
Clerk of the Select Board