

Town of Chester

Board of Selectmen

Minutes

September 12, 2016

Chairman John B. opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Minutes of 8/29/16 approved. Warrants approved.

Mr. Alan Dukes: Mr. Dukes has bought a home at 50 Middlefield St. Currently has no electricity and no water. He contacted the water department to install a meter in the cellar, but installer refused to do the work given the fact that there is no electricity. He has also been to the Electric Light Commissioners, but needs electrical work done in the home before his electricity can be turned on, as per the Wire Inspector, John Vanheyningen. After discussion the Board advised Pat and the Water Dept. to ask our new "as needed" water meter installer, Matt Drennan, to pay a site visit and determine if he feels comfortable installing the meter, or if he feels it is a safety issue. We will let him decide and report back what he says.

John Murray: Highway: John began by discussing an issue that he felt uncomfortable with. While he was away on vacation, someone was more or less "watching" when the highway guys reported for work, and again watching while they were out mowing. John B. responded that unfortunately, when you work for a municipality, while it is unnerving, it unfortunately comes with the job, which is always in the eye of the public. He suggested John M. try to shrug it off and just go about their business. John M. then went over the list (in file) of activities for the last week or so by the Highway Department. Discussion of cost of a new blower which could be added to the mower. Rosanne received 3 or 4 quotes, with the lowest one being approximately \$6,000. Rene motioned, Barb 2nd to buy the blower. We will check with CMELD before going ahead. John M. outlined problems with the vehicles and their status as of today. Rene suggested John should check with T. Engwer to make sure his mechanic is "certified" to work on the Highway trucks before we spend too much more money. Barbara asked when the "no parking" signs went up on Middlefield Rd. and why? John responded that in conjunction with the Police Department they put them up. It is a safety hazard when people park on the side near entrance to the Arches. Unfortunately there is no actual parking area available although the site is pretty heavily visited. Pat will try to check with various organizations/land owners to try to find some resolution. Barbara made note of the fact that the patching that had been done all looked good, but there was still more to do. John responded that they were not done, but being held up right now with the truck issues. Talk of the culvert work for ERR and Johnson Rd before the Chapter 90 projects get started. Should we still hire the "Maintenance Man" to come for a couple of days, or get prices, etc. Pat suggested she and Ro would go over the budget for contracted services and come up with a figure that could be available for the work. We will have to designate dump areas as well. Discussion of hiring a 4th man in the highway department. The Board agrees that it is needed. Pat will send draft job descriptions to the board and we will discuss next week. And develop a budget item that could be brought up at a STM to be held sometime a little later this year.

Ron Ouimette, Bay Valley Masonry: Ron has devised what we hope will be a solution to the winter problem of the Senior Center door not opening/closing, due to ice buildup. He proposed a plan that we think may work at a pretty reasonable amount (\$1,200) before we spend too much for what could be a much larger plan. He can start tomorrow and the Highway Department will help in the process, thereby saving some money as well. Barbara moved to accept the plan, Rene seconded. Unanimous. Ron also complimented John M. and the highway department for work done on Maynard Rd.

Senior Work Off Program: The name of Gerry Zebrowski was submitted to the board for approval of placing him on the Senior Work Off program. Gerry will work primarily in the tax collectors office for FY 2017, and will fill the 8th and last slot available in the program at this time. Barbara moved to appoint Gerry to the program. Rene 2nd. Unanimous.

Oil bids: Pat reported she has received only 2 bids for the 2016-2017 season. After discussion the Board rejected the two bids. Pat will go out again with new parameters and try to get something back by next week's meeting.

DEP Sanitary Survey: We continue to have "Conditional Capacity" from DEP, which is based upon two items that have been noted in the past that still need to be adequately addressed, primarily administrative. Pat and Bernie are working on them and will report back to the Board. Further information will be coming from DEP. There were a number of issues that we are looking to address at the water treatment plant. Pat was instructed to reach out to Mike Leach, our DEP liason, for more explanation and assistance. John B. noted this was not an "order of conditions", but items that have been ongoing for some time.

Richie Small: Fire Chief: Richie had requested signature on a "Regional Shelter Agreement" with Westfield State college that has been undergoing consideration for some time. Barbara moved, Rene 2nd. Unanimous.

Citizens comments:

Ed Meecham agrees with hiring a 4th man in the highway department. Tom Beck asked why the highway was still starting at 5:30 am. John M. explained that they get to the garage at 5:30, get the trucks ready, then drive to Westfield to pick up black top material when the plant opens at 6:30. The part timers will be done at the end of the month, and they will go back to a 5 day work week, 7 am to 3:30. Discussion took place regarding hours at the highway department 4-day work week, man power issues. Rene was not a big fan of 4-10 hr days due to lack of coverage on Fridays. He would suggest with a 4th man that the days be staggered. Two on Mon -Thurs. and two on Tues through Friday. After more discussion John M. agreed to modify their work week beginning week of Sept. 19th to 6:00 am to 4:30 p.m. Pat will work on future policy for highway to present to board.

Rene then had a list of questions to bring up.

1. Would like itemized report of all accounts, primarily Highway and BOH, to familiarize himself with expenditures. He also has had some complaints about availability of turning over money and information having to do with the Transfer state. Pat will discuss with BOH. There is some confusion as to who oversees the transfer station. John B. suggested the BOH come in to a meeting if they would like to discuss.

2. Had questions regarding Building Inspector fees. Pat will check with Art Lawler and ask for a fee schedule.
3. Has a concern with John M. using his own vehicle on work hours. Are we covered through our insurance? John M. explained he used his vehicle because there was not one available due to repairs. Pat will check with MIIA, our insurance carrier to see about a rider, or something comparable.

John B. moved to adjourn. Barb 2nd. Unanimous. Adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia D. Carlino, Town Administrator

John Baldasaro, Chairman

Barbara Huntoon, Vice Chairman

Rene Senecal, Clerk