

Town of Chester Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

Meeting Minutes - January 9, 2017

Chairman Baldasaro opened meeting at 6:00 pm. Minutes of December 19, 2016 were approved and signed. Warrants were approved and signed.

Highway Department -John Murray absent due to medical condition. Depending on how long he must be out of work, discussion regarding assigning authority to Steve Cooper to take "lead" position and make decisions regarding snow removal call-outs etc. Need to clarify length of absence.

Information regarding repair costs to 2012 International dump truck, currently in excess of \$23,000.00, truck was purchased new under State Contract VEH93. It has been discovered there is a class action law suit against the manufacturer of the engine. Admin Asst. to research-

Questions regarding residents plowing and snow blowing snow back into roads causing dangerous road conditions, it is violation of MA GL, chief of police to be requested to contact specific residents.

RAO (Records Access Officer) new state mandate, after discussion, it was determined that each department will continue to maintain their own records, the Town Clerk will be assigned the task of recording and distributing initial requests to appropriate departments who will be responsible to provide records as requested. Need clarification to what the state requirement is for response time and develop process. On-line requests, through website in person –etc.

Finance Committee appointment postponed. Discussion regarding vacancies, Selectwoman Huntoon recruiting Jason Forge as committee member. Appointment of Rosanne McClafin to be made upon clarification of any ethics conflict.

Town Administrator - Chester ADA Transition plan signed. MMA forms signed by Chairman Baldasaro. Discussion regarding Admin Ass.t transition to Town Hall, research phones to allow "call forwarding" vs. multiple lines etc. Continued research for new computer technology and IT solutions.

Chairman Baldasaro would like to start the "New Year" with proposed changes, wants to be more "pro-active vs. re-active" allow departments to be responsible on for front line issues- i.e. all calls to BOS members regarding road conditions or other Highway Department issues from residents to be referred to John Murray - Highway Superintendent for initial response, responses must be made in a timely manner, if no satisfaction for resident, then BOS members can be called upon for input/resolution. Too much time spent in BOS meeting regarding daily operations of Highway Department. Chairman Baldasaro would like to start having Department Head meeting on a regular basis to promote communication and effectiveness. Will request "Wish Lists" to improve functionality. First Dept. Head meeting tentatively scheduled for January 23, 2017.

Research MA Grant regarding culvert engineering for Old State Road.

Citizens Comments:

Mr. Meacham questioning why "road plan" for plowing not prepared and posted, also felt excessive use of salt on roads this season, concerned for safety of water supply/residents wells, and lack of response from Highway Department regarding previous issue of too much stone in culverts. Questioned hiring of additional "on-call" employee to operate F-

350, no advertisements. Admin Assistant stated there has been a new hire, that there is only one available vehicle for use, so no need for additional advertisements.

Mr. Hickson requested copy of Treasurers audit, has not yet been done. Stated website is a mess, additional discussion regarding current research for IT solution. Also would like PVPC to do feasibility study for sale of electric company as electric costs have continued to rise as well as solar limitations.

Mr. Beck asked if free cash has been certified yet (it has not) is not usually available until March. Questioned commercial vehicle overnight parking at pull off near Hampden St, Admin Asst. to order sign "No Overnight Commercial Vehicle Parking". Asked about vehicles on Old State Rd being parked to close to road to allow effective plowing, Chief of Police to be asked to look into. What is going to be done with section of pole hanging over Abbott and Brown Rd intersection, has been long term issue, Admin Ass.t to research.

General discussion:

Regarding COA door, no additional problems since water pipe fixed. M & M Service very responsive, did great job repairing water line to Town Hall.

Selectwoman Huntoon asking for clarification on water situation in ton from water plant operator, are we still in drought conditions.

Jeff Dixon to repair pressure valve on Town Hall boiler.

John Murray as JTC representative as our current rep is a selectman from Hatfield and BOS feel we are not well represented in that situation, what do we need to do and what are our options?

Chairman Baldasaro motion to adjourn, Selectwoman Huntoon 2nd. Meeting adjourned 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosanne McClafin

Recording Secretary

John Baldasaro, Chairman

Barbara Huntoon, Vice Chairman

Rene Senecal, Clerk