

TOWN OF CHESTER

Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2017

Attendance: BOS-Chairman John Baldasaro, Vice-Chairman Barbara Huntoon, Clerk Rene Senecal, Town Administrator Patricia Carlino, Administrative Assistant Rosanne McClafin, Highway Superintendent John Murray, Attorney Leonard Cohen, Gene Watters, Bob Daly, Jerry Zebrowski, Pam Zebrowski, Wilma Foley, John Foley, Duane Pease, Mary Ann Pease, Steve Cooper, Jan Sakaske, Joel Sakaske, Jamie Sakaske, Lynn Pease, Matt Vachula, Sam Bandoski, Bob Liaccovili

- 1. Chairman Baldasaro called the meeting to order 6:00 p.m.**
- 2. Minutes from last meeting date September 11, 2017 were approved and signed.**
- 3. Highway Department – John Murray** review and discussion of \$13794.48 estimate for repair of 1988 Dresser grader brakes. Brakes had been repaired in 9/2016 at a cost of \$9700.00. The Board feels the Superintendent should pursue complaint to previous vendor for warranty of their work, and pursue other estimates before proceeding with additional repair and cost. Chairman Baldasaro requested status report be on BoS meeting agenda for 9/25/2017. Superintendent Murray noted mowing is ongoing on East River Road, continued addition of material to edges of newly paved Johnson Hill and work to be done on Melvin Road scheduled for this week. F-350 is at Sarat Ford for repairs, Sarat has provided the Town with a 'loaner dump truck'. Chairman Baldasaro asked if there was any additional highway topics, Superintendent Murray read a statement (see attached) to the Board regarding comments and discussion from 9/11/2017 meeting, no comment or discussion regarding statement read by Murray. Superintendent Murray also referenced a letter from Palmer Paving regarding process and work performance of Johnson Hill paving noting that the job went smoothly and efficiently. Vice-Chairman Huntoon asked if tree trimming was still in process, Superintendent Murray noted that all tree removal funds had been expended. Chairman Baldasaro asked about line painting, Admin Asst. to press vendor for scheduling. Superintendent Murray asked the Board to provide support in the resolution of payroll deduction issues related to retirement and health insurance, (eliminating item number 4 on Agenda: Steve Cooper/payroll deductions), Admin Asst McClafin noted that charges and credits appear on pay-stubs without explanation or clarification, and that she had been asked to relay complaint regarding availability of

Treasurer for turn-overs from departments. Turn-overs are not being made in a timely fashion due to limited scheduled hours of Treasurer. CMELD/Water Dept. employee Pam Zebrowski noted that leaving deposits that include cash and checks unsecured in the Treasurer's 'IN' box is not a safe or secure option. Vice-Chairman Huntoon would like the Board to be notified sooner when such issues occur. Chairman Baldasaro requested Treasurer and Accountant be present at next meeting. Discussion regarding accountant availability and job requirements followed, further discussion of option of Hilltown Collaborative Shared Services in regard to these positions. Discussion turned to school committee meeting, Chairman Baldasaro noted that MARS will mediate future meeting with School Committee and newly form Advisory Committee. Additional discussion followed regarding current school department meeting procedures and budget.

4. **Town Administrator-Patricia Carlino** MIIA Grant – pulled for additional information to be presented for signature 9/25/2017.
5. **Citizen Comments-** Mary Ann Pease noted that since 2005, Board of Selectmen meeting minutes reflect same issues as discussed in current meetings regarding the Highway Department, with no resolutions. Duane Pease asked about the age of the grader – 1988 – Chairman Baldasaro noted that extensive repairs have been made over the past few years and additional major repairs should be unlikely, the useful life of the equipment should be extended for another 5-10 years, and that equipment of this nature may be additional option for the Shared Services. Pam Zebrowski also commented that the Superintendent's position is "a thank-less job". Vice-Chairman Huntoon feels the Board has been supportive but this is a "disconnect". Additional discussion regarding Highway Department, complaints, budgetary concerns and efficiency. Clerk Senecal noted his concern is regarding financials. Chairman Baldasaro agreed, it is the responsibility of the BoS to spend dollars efficiently. Bob Daly asked if the Town website could be used to post the Highway Departments weekly work schedule, the Board felt this is not feasible. Many additional attendees voiced support for Superintendent Murray, noting accomplishments, equipment operation and dedication. Joel Sakaske noted that he feels Murray is underpaid – Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted salary comparison reflected Chester is "in the middle of the road" regarding pay scale. Atty Leonard Cohen asked if he should speak now or would he be allowed to have a dialogue during Executive Session, Chairman Baldasaro noted that the rules of executive session restrict attorney participation, Mr. Cohen asked for a recess to confer with his client, Chairman Baldasaro stated Mr. Cohen could confer with his client at any time, but the Board would continue with Citizen Comments until motion to move to executive session. Mr. Foley asked for clarification to reference of "scaling" on brakes of grader vs. "rust", Clerk Senecal noted term used in general reference by

vendors for “build-up” on brakes. Mr. Foley also noted that even though only a small percentage of resident’s voice complaints, it should not be assumed that the people who are not complaining are satisfied. Jerry Zebrowski commented that no matter what vehicle or piece of equipment, brakes are a mechanical issue that vendors will not likely warrantee for more than 90 days.

There being no further discussion Chairman Baldasaromotioned on a roll call vote to move to Executive Session for the purpose of discipline or dismissal of a town employee, with no intention of returning to regular session: Clerk Senecal-AYE, Vice-Chairman Huntoon-AYE, Chairman Baldasaro-AYE, unanimous.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING SEPTEMBER 25, 2017 6:00 P.M.

Minutes submitted by: Rosanne McClaflin

John Baldasaro – Chairman

Barbara Huntoon – Vice-Chairman

Rene Senecal – Clerk

ATTACHMENT

September 15, 2017

I am writing as I feel I am better able to communicate in this manner. I would like to respond to some of the comments made during multiple Board of Selectmen meetings.

First, I would like to remind the Board that on multiple occasions, I have asked for written examples or explanations of what the Board feels I am doing wrong, or not doing, to date I have not received any written feedback as requested.

I would like to point out that during the Board of Selectmen meeting 1/19/2017, the Board clearly stated that they would no longer take complaints from residents regarding the Highway Department, that instead they would refer residents directly to the Superintendent, and then if residents were not satisfied in a timely manner, then the Board would review the with the department. I do not understand what "multiple complaints" the Board states they are receiving, and if they have been receiving complaints, then the Board is not following the plan they instituted.

On multiple occasions, the Board has stated they "do not want to micro-manage" the Highway Department, but want me to "take the bull by the horns" and do the job. This has not happened, more often than not, every action I take, every decision I make is torn apart. I resort to asking, "what do you want me to do" or "I will do whatever you want me to" as a means of appeasing the Board, not because I am not "taking the bull by the horns" but because I am constantly berated. I am told to "make a plan, and stick to it" unless there is an emergency or a safety issue, yet I address issues as they are referred by the Board. I.e., removal of boards at the ball lot pavilion, I was asked to do it, yet once it was completed, I was then immediately asked why I wasted Highway Department time doing it.

There were multiple references made to me not doing "administrative functions" of this position, Rosanne was hired to be the Highway Dept. Administrative Assistant and has been performing the duties she has been assigned. We work together to determine what needs to be done. So I am not clear what exactly what the Board is referring to in this instance.

I have addressed items that have not been taken care of for many years, such cleaning catch basins and storm drains. Road side mowing had not been done for several years and has now been on-going since 7/19/2017 - provided the mower is available to the Highway Dept. and when other projects are not priority.

I accept that I have made mistakes and I try to learn from them, EVERYONE makes mistakes, no matter who they are, what job they hold or where.