

# TOWN OF CHESTER

## Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

### Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2017

Attendance: BOS-Chairman John Baldasaro, Vice-Chairman Barbara Huntoon, Town Administrator Patricia Carlino, Administrative Assistant Rosanne McClafin, Gene Watters, Bob Daly, Jeanne Leclair, Andy Myers, Steve Cooper, Erica Johnson (PVPC), Joel Bargmann (Bergmann Hendrie & Assoc. Architect), Mike Donovan (Country Journal)

- I. **Chairman Baldasaro called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on October 23, 2017**
- II. **Minutes from last meeting date October 16, 2017 were approved and signed.**
- III. **Warrants were approved and signed.**

**Meeting moved ahead to Town Administrator while waiting for PVPC scheduled for 6:15**

- IV. **Town Administrator -Pat Carlino:** Notice - GRSD Committee unanimous vote to institute recommendation by MARS facilitated discussion 10/5 to invite each select board to choose a representative to attend school committee executive sessions regarding teachers' union negotiations. Board will delay choosing a representative until full board is present.

MARS request for town to complete data sheets to provide information related to Town's expected/anticipated future capital expenditures to be used toward school budget development. Discussion followed, items to be included in projected expense list, new firetruck, new highway department truck, Town Hall expense for repair or replacement of elevator, mold remediation, dam repair, Blandford Road bridge repair, Horn Pond water transmission lines, \$325,000 annual road repair expense, new COA van, estimated professional development and IT upgrades in Town Hall and possible record retention. Trick or Treat-Tuesday October 31, 2017 5-7Lt. Governor Polito to visit East River Rd MassWorks grant site 10/26/17 at 3:00 p.m. BOS unable to attend, Town Administrator Carlino, Highway Superintendent Murray and Admin Asst. McClafin to attend. Event is open to the public.

- V. **PVPC-Erica Johnson/Joel Bargmann-COA feasibility study:** Joel and Erica met with COA Director and members, Joel will be doing needs assessment for COA space issues, lots of information and feedback from COA members, discussion followed including previously discussed space availability at elementary school, expansion into hallway or police department, short term and long term objectives, review by structural engineers regarding wall removal, code requirements, ADA compliance, increasing hours to accommodate additional programs, possibility of requesting additional funds from "town floor" on behalf of seniors and growing senior population.

Erica announced final paperwork for Hampden St CDBG forwarded to the State, should have final "go ahead" soon. PVPC offer to oversee MassWorks grant for fee.

**VI. Treasurer-**not present- Town Administrator Carlino offered information that Melissa Zawadski had been working with the Treasurer, going well, slow process. Melissa noted she would make appointment to sit with the Treasurer at her availability. Indicated Treasurer was using “cash book”. Bob Daly asked if Melissa would provide exit interview, Chairman Baldasaro clarified – exit interview to be done by DOR auditor. Discussion of through-door lock box for turnovers to be made to Treasurer securely in her absence. Options to be researched.

**VII. Water Commitment/Treasury Warrant signed, Thank-you letters held until Clerk Senecal present to sign.**

**VIII. Citizen Comments:**

Jeanne Leclair-Economic Development Coordinator: newly implemented Gateway Enterprise Club saw 23 students sign up for program to develop business management skills. Blandford to share use of Russell Pond as another shared service aspect.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon asked about progress toward a permanent Visitor Center, discussion followed regarding options for possible kiosk or gazebo, and asked if information was available regarding Town owned property on Rte. 20 across from Main St.- Admin Asst. McClafin noted the assessors had provided documents that appeared to contradict the ownership rights, upon review of documents Chairman Baldasaro noted deed reference to Town ownership to be researched, verification with MASS DOT, if Town does own the property, signs can be erected outside of MASS DOT ROW on state owned roads. Discussion of type of sign to be erected for public announcements. Research to be done for appropriate sign.

Bob Daly questioned if Town employees whose payroll deductions for retirement were posted erroneously have been fully credited for their deductions and if any employees were incorrectly charged any fees due to the posting errors. Steve Cooper to meet with Town Administrator to review and confirm that no losses or fees have been incurred. Additional discussion of implementing process for bi-weekly electronic transfers of retirement funds vs. monthly check remittance. Town must authorize payroll company to process accordingly. Chairman Baldasaro stated that efforts would be taken to ensure no employee would incur any loss or erroneous fees and noted these issues highlight the need for professional financial services. Discussion of process to change from elected to appointed positions.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon asked if there was any information regarding Huntington Special Town Meeting related to GRSD budget, Huntington passed the budget. Huntoon asked if we still have to vote, Town Administrator noted “yes” still must vote to appropriate. Chairman Baldasaro offered personal opinion that voters should “vote their conscience”, and noted that at this time GRSD has taken steps toward working better with the Towns, which was much of the original issue with the budget proposals, that the Towns have “no say” in development of the budget.

Andy Myers brought up topic of non-profit NEFF (New England Forestry Foundation) and Assessors determination to tax property owned by NEFF. 900 plus acres of land should be available for public access but the closed bridge and signage indicating otherwise leads assessors to believe NEFF is not honoring the agreement and feels \$1800 per year in taxes should be paid by NEFF. Discussion followed regarding

negotiating with NEFF vs. court proceeding, consensus that a meeting should be held with NEFF to discuss favorable options prior to January court date. Town Administrator Carlino to coordinate.

Bob Daly recognized Mike Donovan's many years of service to the Country Journal, Mr. Donovan will be leaving the Journal-10/23/2017 will be last Chester BOS meeting he will report on.

Administrative Asst. McClafin noted meeting with MA DEP and Wild & Scenic River representatives Mark Stinson and Liz Lacy regarding Old State Road culvert very constructive, approval from DEP and Wild & Scenic to do repair. Estimates for repair work to be pursued.

Steve Cooper noted grader had been rented for the week of 10/23 – 10/27 and would be in use on Mica Mill, Holcomb, Maynard, Crane Lyman and Smith Roads (not necessarily in that order).

**There being no further discussion Chairman Baldasaro adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.**

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OCTOBER 30, 2017 6:00 P.M.

Minutes submitted by: Rosanne McClafin

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John Baldasaro – Chairman

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Barbara Huntoon – Vice-Chairman

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Rene Senecal - Clerk