

Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Board of Appeals
Minutes of 7/9/18

1. Chairman Huntoon opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.
2. Minutes of 6/18, 6/25, and 7/2 were reviewed and 6/18 and 7/2 were returned to Carlino for minor corrections and will be signed at the next meeting. Minutes of 7/2 were signed.
3. Interviews for Asst. Admin/Highway Asst.

Katherine Warden: B. Huntoon asked "Why are you interested in this position?" and Katherine responded that it's somewhat the same job she has in Hinsdale and she is just looking to try a different town. B. Huntoon how much she would be looking at as far as salary/pay went. Katherine responded that she would be looking for \$23 or \$24 per hr.+ benefits.

Currently she works as the administrative assistant to the Hinsdale Administrator as well as R. Senecal in the highway department and helps other departments whenever necessary. Rene pointed out that this position may expand if a "shared administrator" is pursued by the town. Katherine described some of the activities she has been involved in over the years in Hinsdale, particularly regarding the Transfer Station. She secured a grant for it, instituted changes that helped out both the town and the taxpayers and pursued other avenues, including the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste agency and using community service workers from the Berkshire County Court system. Katherine then asked the Board what they were looking for. J. Baldasaro responded that they are looking for someone that can be aggressive with grants. She has helped R. Senecal with grants. She pretty much does everything that the current job description describes. She is familiar with the ABCC and was helpful in Hinsdale obtaining "Complete Streets" distinction. She is also the Public Records officer in Hinsdale. She works with the public and other departments. J. Baldasaro asked about minutes. Katherine indicated she "hates doing minutes" but has studied how they can be done without spending hours on them. Currently she is a 30 hr. per week employee. B. Huntoon explained we are hiring for a 25-hr. week, Mon. thru Fri., 9-2 and asked if that would be a problem. Katherine indicated it would be as she is really looking for 30 hours. Discussion was held that future needs of town may indicate an increase in hours and Katherine was asked if she would ~~she~~ be interested in the event that things change. She indicated she would be.

Stephanie Bodendorf Per Pat, Ms. Bodendorf had an emergency and was unable to attend her interview.

4. Terry Donovan: Animal Control Officer
Terry came in to discuss the permitting of beaver control. She was dismayed ~~that~~ after the discussion with the Board a couple of months ago ~~that~~ another permit had been given to the highway department without a full Board of Health meeting to approve it. There was discussion about who could issue certain permits, the local BOH or Mass. Fish and Wildlife? Rene spoke about emergency permits in regard to necessary road work, for public safety, etc. Question: Who determines if it is an emergency? No answer was determined. Terry will continue to

pursue grants for alternative methods in dealing with beaver control. The Board - The Board will request BOH attend 7/23 meeting to discuss.

5. Irene Shedd:

Irene was in to appeal for help from the Board regarding her tax problems and Board of Health problems. She explained the issues involved for both and states she believes she has been unfairly taxed and penalized. Mary Ann Pease, Tax Collector, was also in attendance and gave the board an overview of where ~~she~~ Mrs. Shedd stands now, after the case has been to Land Court and a judgement issued. Mrs. Shedd also stated that the Board of Health had been at her home several times, done an inaccurate assessment of her home, and had issued a Condemnation Order. The Board asked that someone from the BOH come up to the meeting, and Norma McDonald, BOH Chair, came up and gave the Board an overview of the process that had been used for Irene's home. Initially, there was confusion about whether or not an actual order of condemnation had been made, until Mrs. Shedd provided the actual order to the Board. In addition, Mrs. Shedd stated although the Assessors did lower her value, there was a question as to why they had not done so before, once the Board of Health had assessed the house. The Board asked Carlino to gather the information from the different boards and return it to them next meeting (7/16) for their review. Tax Collector Pease offered to contact tax attorney to find out if there is a process to lower the amount Mrs. Shedd owed as determined by Land Court. They also asked that someone from the Assessors be in attendance at the 7/16 meeting. J. Baldasaro feels that this started out as a "town error" and the property owner should not suffer because of it. J. Baldasaro stated that PVPC will do whatever the BOS asks them to do regarding a loan to her for repairs to her home once the tax lien has been lifted. Mrs. Shedd also mentioned her electric bill seems to have increased exponentially and B. Huntoon instructed her to contact CMELD about that issue.

6. The board received a letter from DEP in response to the letter the Board sent out to our legislators regarding DEP's change in policy of helping small water systems "on site". In the letter, DEP mentioned they will be of help when necessary. Pat will follow up with Water Operator Bernie St. Martin.

7. A memo regarding Becket spring was read and the Board reiterated that they would have no involvement in the spring.

8. Town Accountant position:

Continued from 7/2. Rene stated he did review everything he felt he should. He stated that he had received text messages from a town employee who referenced other town employees in the messages, trying to influence his decision knowing he held the deciding vote. He added that his final decision was not influenced in any way by this outside factor. "I find it totally unacceptable. I find it borderline unethical that I would get texts explaining to me pros and cons of different individuals when they knew that I was the deciding vote. It would have been one thing to bring that up in open discussion during a prior meeting, but it wasn't." He then said that after review he would support Paula Beck for the position but would ask for a review in six

months. As B. Huntoon had voted for Jason Forgue and J. Baldasaro had voted for Paula Beck, R. Senecal made a motion to appoint Paul Beck to the position of Town Accountant. J. Baldasaro seconded. On a vote of 2-1, Paula Beck was appointed to the position. Chairman Huntoon congratulated Mrs. Beck and welcomed her aboard. Tax Collector Mary Ann Pease asked that every effort be made to have some office hours where the Accountant, Treasurer and she could be in contact with each other at one time. Mrs. Beck agreed. Resident Bob Daley asked to be recognized and Chairman Huntoon did so. Mr. Daley complimented Jason Forgue for applying for the Accountant's position and for all he is doing for town involving Rec. Committee and Emery St. Ballfield.

9. B. Huntoon stated in general we need a shift at town hall, need to stick to business.
10. B. Huntoon asked Carlino if we had a report from the Highway. As J. Murray is out, there was no report at this time. Regarding Highway, B. Huntoon had a report that someone from the highway department had cut a burl from a tree on the corner of Crane/Maynard. She had pictures on her phone. Steve Cooper was in attendance but said he didn't know who did it and it wasn't him. Huntoon stated she did get the info "third hand" and just wanted to check with Hwy. Dept.
11. B. Huntoon produced a flyer from Lee Chamber of Commerce regarding new "Christmas" tree in Lee. Pat will check that out for costs and where it came from.
12. Rene brought up the issue of access to water at the ballfield for irrigation as requested by Jason Forgue at last meeting. Bernie St. Martin has informed him, as well as Carlino, that treated water from the plant should not be used for anything but consumer use, as per DEP. Rene also suggested to Jason to check out the water building at the highway garage for a portable water pump which may be useful.
13. Board Reminded Carlino to send out reappointment letters as some appointees were not sure where they stood. The Board also asked Carlino to contact fellow who applied for plumbing inspector to see if he would be interested in being "secondary" inspector.
14. The Board asked status of Highway Superintendent. Due to HIPPA laws, Carlino can only confirm he is out for time being.
15. Bob Daley: In regards to Transfer Station there are new developments. Gets really busy. Need to do a review of dump operations, how to increase revenue, enforcement, traffic flow, drainage, attendant and BOH. Carlino will notify those involved that the Board would like them to come to a BOS meeting on 8/27/18 to talk about it.
16. Carlino will ask the BOH to come to the 7/23 meeting to discuss the beaver situation and the Shedd situation. Question; does the BOH condemn property, or does BI have to be involved? No answer at this time; will discuss with BOH.

17. Citizens Comments:

- a. John Foley agreed with Mary Ann's statements, and the error made by the Treasurer long ago.
 - b. Ron Ouimette : Ron had questions about reappointments and how they are made, and why. He's wondering why J. Murray and Carlino had not been reappointed. B. Huntoon explained that all appointed positions are reappointed each year. Regarding the Highway Superintendent position, the Board -wants to investigate other candidates. B. Huntoon stated there have been some issues with current highway superintendent. R. Senecal stated Board cannot give specific examples as Highway Superintendent is not in attendance at this time. (This is inaccurate as we cannot discuss performance in Executive Session.) J. Baldasaro suggested Ron read the last 6 months of BOS minutes and the issues discussed. Ron said he would do so.
 - c. John Foley asked about reappointments and if people in office retained their status until an appointment was made. Yes, they serve until replaced.
 - d. Bob Daley thinks the Board is doing their due diligence. Asked if Treasurer had to have posted hours? No. Asked if the Teachers have decided on their contract and will it be posted. B. Huntoon believes it has been approved but could not divulge any particulars without a firm resolution from the school.
 - e. Jason Forge reported the Ballfield will probably be having fall soccer and maybe a couple of other games this year. Asked if the Rec Committee has the authority to let other groups use the field, or not? The Board suggested Jason take calls from other groups to check schedule and let Board know if any issues and asked if Jason would be willing to supply his cell phone number for anyone that might want to get in touch with him about field use; he agreed. R. Senecal noted Jason had cut some trees near river at Emery field and cautioned him to be careful not to cut too close to river. Jason responded he was using pole saw and only trimming. He also mentioned old, unused shed and concern about infringing on potential wetlands with the debris from it. Board suggested he call R. Duane Pease of Conservation Commission to have him look it over. Jason said he will do so. He then asked if the Board is on the agenda for the Electric Light Commissioners meeting to discuss power hookup for Emery field. Pat related next scheduled CMELD Commissioner's meeting is for August 14th. Board asked if they can they get a meeting sooner than that? Could they do a "special" meeting? Carlino to try to set something up sooner than 8/14, preferable the week of 7/16/18. Jason asked if they could keep the manifold for the water in the new shed? The board had no objection. He also was disappointed by the reappointment of the Building Inspector. He questioned the time commitment, and trouble scheduling inspections. J. Baldasaro suggested perhaps we should have an Assistant BI, and would Jason be interested in that? Jason responded he would depending upon the salary, etc. Carlino will follow up with Art Lawler for his input.
 - f. Bob Daley: So will we have Dump discussion? Yes, on August 27th.
 - g. Ro McClafin: Question as to how someone goes from hired to Appointed? J. Baldasaro explained a person is hired for the appointed position.
18. B. Huntoon noticed in our job description for Asst. Admin/Highway Admin., both Administrative and Assistant are spelled wrong.

There being no other business, Chairman Huntoon asked for a motion to adjourn, J. Baldasaro moved to adjourn. R. Senecal seconded. Unanimous to adjourn at 8:45 pm.

Barbara Huntoon, Chairman

John Baldasaro, Vice Chairman

Rene Senecal, Clerk