

**Town of Chester Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals  
Meeting Minutes for January 28, 2019**

Attending: Select Board members Barbara Huntoon & John Baldasaro, Town Administrator Kathe Warden and various members of the public

Barbara opens the meeting at 6:00pm, the Select Board is recording the meeting. Minutes of January 14, 2018 were reviewed and signed. There were no warrants to be signed.

**New Business -**

**Chester Historical Society** – requests for use of Town Hall Auditorium for Penny Social- April 13, Snowflake Holiday Craft Fair -December 3 and in case of rain on Memorial Day May 27. – Kathe pointed out there was a typing error that the Snowflake Holiday Craft Fair would be November 3 not December 3. Barbara said it is usually the first Saturday in November which that makes the date November 2, Kathe will confirm with the Historical Commission on that. John makes a motion to accept the dates, Barbara seconds it all vote aye.

**Old Business** - Discussion and approval of Land Conservancy letter for Gobble Mtn Trail - Kathe had drawn up the letter and was signed by both Select Board members on Thursday due to a grant deadline that Land Conservancy needed to submit it for. Land Conservancy sent a thank you and had received it

**Town Administrator update:**

**Post office box receptacle** – Kathe explained she had contacted the Post office to put in a out bound mail/drop box outside town hall. Currently the town offices must run any outgoing mail down to the Post office and it is an inconvenience. The Post Office will investigate it and let the Town know if they will install one.

**Warrants** – Kathe said there seemed to be confusion about when warrants will be signed by the Select Board if there isn't a meeting, and she had put together a calendar to help with the confusion. She talked to Paula that day and Paula would like to payable warrants every week instead of every other as listed. After a brief discussion, John said that signing warrants on Monday would work best and if there isn't a meeting, he and Barbara would both stop in to sign off on them. Kathe said she would let all the town offices know that warrants would be signed on Mondays, and payables need to be to Paula Beck by Wednesday at 3:00pm to be processed on Thursdays when she is here.

**MIIA** – designation of Work Safety Representative – Kathe said the MIIA wants a work safety representative designated due to February 1 Osha regulations going into effect. John said he would talk to Matt at CMELD to see if he would like to do it otherwise John would do it,

**Town Report** – Kathe asked if she could use a Senior Work off person to help with the Town report. She would like to add a contacts page for both the Town, State and Federal contacts that resident might need as well as office hours and a history page about Chester. She had 2 residents who still needed hours to fill and would like to use one of them for the project.

**Employee Handbook** – review/possible vote to accept – Barbara wants to put the handbook on February 11 and just keep working on it at every meeting.

Kathe gave updates on meetings scheduled with MIIA, Molly Watts PVPC for IT grant, New England IT and Zack Blake with DOR.

**IT Grant update** – Kathe says she is meeting with Molly on Tuesday and for an update about the grant. A discussion follows with what is needed from the grant and how soon the project can get started.

**Mass DEP - Rectrac designation** - Kathe says a letter was received from Veronique Blanchard about designating a new ReTrac person, it was Pat Carlino before. Barbara asked Kathe to do it.

New employee Hire forms and increase in wage forms – The accounting and treasurer’s office are asking for a paper trail for new hires and wage increases that have signatures on them. Kathe provided a set for Barbara and John to look over. A discussion about retention records and updating the different departments.

The Shared Police Dept grant is moving along, Kathe contacted legal counsel Tom Mullen for his estimate for reviewing the report. She said that there had been a discussion with Blandford about one or both town counsel reviewing the agreement. She asked if Tom was needed for Town Meeting or review of the Warrant. John said only if there were questions on certain articles. John was concerned about the money that was being asked for in the grant, that it wouldn’t be enough. Bob Daley asked about the agreement and where it would be physically located. Barbara said it would be in both locations and the work for the agreement is part of the grant.

Chester Theatre notified the Select Board that they would use the auditorium from May 27 – August 23.

## **Letters for the Select Board to address & sign –**

A letter for Lt Gov Polito to accept Rep Pignatelli recommendations for change in the Chapter 90 formula funding.

A letter went out to the Governor from the Mass Rural Schools to support certain rural specific funding changes.

A letter to Attorney General in answer to an open meeting complaint from Mark Brooks, a discussion was held on the history of Mark Brooks about the winter maintenance of Smith Rd.

PVPC – Letter about 2020 TIP Development for 5year projects and appoint a new point of contact

Fish & Game – a grant opportunity for culverts replacements

US Census letter – Voluntary reporting of boundaries, Barbara asked Kathe to let David Pierce know about this.

Franklin County government – a brainstorming breakfast

Ambulance letter – Rate updates for residents

Resignation letter from Morgan Jacquiem from the Board of Health

Thank you letters from Owlyn Dowling for the work done on East River Rd and from Steven Yahn for snow cleanup on Round Hill Rd.

Hilltown Collaborative meeting – Barbara turned it over to John, the Gateway budget was updated, and this year's budget increase is at 1.9% increase, but the Governor's budget came out today and cut the funding to Gateway, so the increase could be 3.5%. John is hope full that the budget will end up only being 1.9%. The fulltime preschool is continued and a certificate program for early child hood education will be started. The regional assessment agreement was discussed with updates after it had been reviewed by the Commissioner of Education. Jean LeClair's salary will be shared with Gateway, taking over 25% of her salary. She will work on marketing to promote Gateway. Barbara thanked John for all his work on the regional assessment agreement.

John talked about the latest storm on Sunday, there has been 9 ice storms and 2 snow storms. There have been many break downs with the equipment, but all repairs have been done in house. The plow on the International is in bad shape and will need to be replaced. He has contacted Village Truck in Lanesboro, they have one that may work so he will go look at it on Friday. Thursday, everyone will be going to Whately for a hydraulics license training class and Eric is going to get his CDL permit. He thanked Wilma for letting him know about Abbott Hill and the water issues.

Bob Daley asked John how much money was saved doing repairs in house and John said it was \$18,000 to \$20,000. Bob also asked about Wendy Long's retirement from Gateway. John said Jean LeClair will be doing the grant writing portion and the rest of Wendy's position will be shared with other employees at Gateway.

Kathe asked to review February 11 agenda. After reviewing preliminary list Barbara asked the visit from Smith Academy be moved to February 25.

**Citizens Comments** – Barbara congratulates John and Wilma Foley for being named Chester Hill Citizens of the Year.

John Foley had concerns about dead end road plowing. John explained how it should be done.

James Higby announced he is submitting paperwork for the Select Board position.

John Foley said he would like to see a "Meet the candidate night". Barbara asked him to speak to the Town Clerk.

Bob Daley asked if someone could contact DOR, they are offering a technical advisory on elected employees and will offer technical report to the town. John explained about the tax recap sheet that affects the town. A discussion follows about assessments.

Bob Daley asked about the auditor's report from the meeting with the accountant and treasurer, Barbara said they would be at the next meeting to talk about.

Jason Forgue says that the land across of the ball field is still for sale, and if the land that was going for tax auction could be earmarked for purchase. Barbara said there should be a minimum and a buyer beware that the town wouldn't be surveying the property. John asked Kathe to have Mary Ann move forward with it. Jason said the ice rink is set up and ready, but asked if the parking area could use help, John said he would get it cleaned up. Jason asked if he could move the playground equipment over to the ball field. Barbara said she was good if it was safe. John was good with it to. Jason said he could do the inspection on it,

John makes a motion to adjourn at 7:45pm, Barbara seconds the motion, all vote aye.

Respectfully submitted

Katherine Warden

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Barbara Huntoon Chair

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John Baldasaro Vice Chair

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Vacancy – Clerk

Meeting Minutes for January 28, 2019 contain 5 pages.