

Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioner/Zoning Board of Appeals
Meeting Minutes April 24, 2017

1. Chairman Baldasaro opened the meeting 6:03 p.m.
2. Minutes of 4/10/2017 meeting were approved and signed.
3. Warrants were signed.
4. Highway Department: John Murray- estimate of \$7627.66 to repair 2012 International. Nutmeg International states there is no warrantee left on vehicle. Truck must be repaired. Class action lawsuit not be certified until 2018. Clerk Senecal asked Murray to “get in writing” detailed analysis from Nutmeg regarding emission failure, believes MA law required emission warrantee minimum. Good progress on other projects, grading has begun. Highway Dept. will use blower to remove sand and debris from sidewalks. Superintendent Murray asked about moving to a 10 hour per day, 4-day week. Vice-Chairman Huntoon not in favor, leaves Fridays uncovered and creates potential for additional overtime expense. Chairman Baldasaro and Clerk Senecal in agreement with Vice-Chairman. Highway Dept. to stay on 5-day work week.
5. Jim Berry – Green Communities Stretch Code – PVPC currently assisting Chester in process of receiving “Green Community” designation. Mr. Berry is liaison for conservation related items. The Town must vote to adopt the code, if the town agrees to participate funding in the amount of \$12,000.00 will become available for energy audit and update. Additionally, an amount up to \$135,000.00 may become available for higher cost updates such as boiler replacements in town owned buildings. Annually, the town will be eligible to apply for up to \$250,000.00. There is no contract term, the Town can “un-adopt” policy at any time. The Town must agree that new vehicle purchases in excess of 8500 lbs. must be energy efficient when practical. New residential construction projects must comply with energy stretch codes including weatherization inspections. Chairman Baldasaro noted this seems to be a “no-brainer” due to the extent of additional funding that becomes available to the town, Vice-Chairman Huntoon does not like the additional expense that will be incurred by the homeowner for the energy audit expense. Chairman Baldasaro would like warrant item at annual town meeting to allow for town to vote.
6. Town Administrator Pat Carlino requested approval for annual town meeting warrant item for \$7500.00 for IT and website services.
7. The Water Dept. plant operator requested the Town pay for training for the water plant assistant operator to upgrade licensing, the Board tabled the request pending research for license requirements.

Chairman Baldasaro provided an overview of meeting held with the town accountant and treasurer, feels good progress was made to improve communication, it was agreed that treasurer needs additional training on software. The Board would like to implement a procedure to ensure monthly balancing between departments. With Board approval, Chairman Baldasaro would like to stay in closer contact with treasurer and accountant to continue to work toward improve communication and process.

Discussion regarding snow removal expense and snow salary deficit. Chairman Baldasaro would like to be able to apply free cash to taxes to lower tax rate for residents. State auditor to be here May 1 for financial audit.

Administrative Assistant McClafin: Street sweeping May 1-3. Old State Rd culvert replacement grant application denied, will pursue additional options as they become available. Received approval for Chapter 90 project request submission for crack sealing. MASDOT reviewed Prospect St retaining wall, no engineering required, need 3 written estimates from MA qualified vendors. Superintendent Murray and McClafin to attend Berkshire County Highway Superintendent meeting 4/27/2017 outlining Chapter 90 procedures and updates.

Citizen comments:

Ron Ouimette:

Is the Highway Department and Board now working smoothly together? Yes

3 weeks ago, the BOS asked the Highway Dept. for plan of action regarding its plans for projects that will not utilize Chapter 90 funding, has the board received it and if so, will it be made public? Yes, the BOS is satisfied with the Highway Department plans, but no, it will not be posted as it primarily for the Board to have an overview of future projects. Still waiting for plan from Superintendent Murray.

Did the Board compile the information it was looking for regarding job posting for highway superintendent vs. DPW superintendent? Yes

Chairman Baldasaro motioned to adjourn 8:35 p.m., Clerk Senecal seconded, meeting adjourned.

Next regularly scheduled meeting May 1, 2017 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Recording secretary Rosanne McClafin

John Baldasaro - Chairman

Barbara Huntoon – Vice-Chairman

Rene Senecal - Clerk