

Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

Minutes

February 22, 2016

1. Chairman Ellershaw opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Minutes of 1/11/16 approved and signed. Warrants signed. Sel. Baldasaro was not in attendance.
2. John Murray: Highway Dept. John M. gave overview of last two weeks work. He asked for Doug Noel to be given a raise of .26 per hr. to bring him up to the same wages as Steve Cooper, the other laborer. After discussion Barbara made a motion to grant the raise of .26 to Doug Noel, beginning 2/23/16. Don seconded. Unanimous.
John M. then discussed his request for a \$2.00 raise based upon his probation time, which ended July 1, 2015. Due to John Baldasaro's absence Don asked if this could be continued until John B. was in attendance. Will put on agenda for next meeting 3/14/16.
3. At this time two MBI representatives were in attendance to speak with the board regarding the newest plans regarding broadband service and Comcast plans. There were maps available to look at and the Selectboard looked them over and made notations to the representatives. Don feels that Comcast has not lived up to their agreement and that they may even be in violation of their contract. He explained that since Chester had its own "poles" through the electric department, that it would be even easier for the project. Questions of the \$40,000,000 that has rumored to be "on hold". The reps were unaware that this was a question. The Governor is still a strong proponent of the broadband initiative and it is going forward. The Selectboard is meeting with Comcast in March and will forward any information they gather to MBI after that meeting.
4. Mike Bell was in attendance to speak about his transition out of the tai kon do program. Mike is retiring in April and will be moving South. He is making plans to transition over the program to Tom Armitage. They were here to discuss how this should work. A draft agreement was supplied for them to look at and to which they agreed. Selectboard will follow up with this request at the next meeting when John B. is present.
5. Richie Small: not in attendance, but Barbara felt he wanted to speak with the board regarding the emergency management meeting he and Barbara attended a couple of weeks ago.
6. Andy Myers: Andy shared that he polled the other towns as to their consideration of asking the School to level fund their budget. He will keep the board apprised of what happens. The

Community compact application is moving, but slowly. March 2nd is the final public hearing for the school budget for 2017.

7. Rene and Deb Senecal: The Senecals attended to speak to the board about the property at 37 Middlefield Rd. The property is now owned by the town, and has been vacant for a number of years (1986). There are raccoons living inside, and they have seen coyotes around. Discussion was held as to what could be done. Can the Fire Dept. do a controlled burn? Pat will check with Fire Dept. Pat will get some prices on razing the property. The Senecals are concerned not just for themselves but for the children and neighbors around the property also.
8. Water meters: Discussion of charging for water meters. The cost of purchase and installation is around \$150.00. Meters are installed free of charge. Unfortunately, sometimes the meters are not protected and freeze up, then have to be replaced. The question is, if the owner is at fault for the freeze up, should they be charged for the second meter. After discussion, Barbara made a motion that any meter replaced after the first one because the owner has not properly given protection for it, that they pay the charge of \$150.00 to the town. Don 2nd. Barbara reiterated that owners should be given documentation with clear instructions as to protection. Pat will draw something up to be handed out with the meters. Unanimous.
9. Town clerk asked the board to set the caucus and election hours. Don made a motion to set the caucus hours from 6-8 pm and the election hours from 10 am to 6 pm. Barbara seconded. Unanimous. Also upon a request from the town clerk, Barbara made a motion to appoint Mike Hickson as a warden, Don 2nd. Unanimous.

10. Citizens Comments:

Mike Hickson and Mike Crochiere explained they were trying to get certain information from the accountant. Although she did send a report out, apparently it was not quite what they were looking for. Pat will follow up

Ed Meecham: Complained that the brush that was cut on Skyline was still there, looked worse then before. Should have been chipped. Pat will follow up with John M.

Do we have a "dangerous intersection" sign to put up on Skyline just before turn on E. River Rd.

Mike Hickson: Asked about excavator use, had anything happened? Discussion followed regarding repair of the culvert on Old State Rd. Can the highway do it? Pat will follow up with John M and also DEP to see what needs to be done before highway commits. Depends on what they want done, and how.

There was some discussion regarding the highway department and what is and isn't being done. Barbara would like to see job description for super. Pat explained that there really isn't one, but there is the ad that people responded to. Don suggested that John M. should be out looking at roads during wet weather to look for drainage problems. Barb also would like to see salary survey from surrounding towns to Chester, not the Berkshires. Pa will follow up.

Don made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Barbara 2nd. Unanimous.

Respectfully,

Patricia Carlino
Town Administrator

Donald Ellershaw, Chairman

John Baldasaro, V. Chairman

Barbara Huntoon, Clerk

BOS minutes
2/22/16