

Chester Board of Selectmen/Water commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

Minutes

September 26, 2016

Chairman John Baldasaro opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Minutes of 9/19/16 were moved and approved. Warrants were approved and signed.

1. Mary Ann Pease: Ambulance

Mary Ann submitted a profit and loss for the Hilltown Ambulance. She informed the Selectboard that for the first time they have had to add monies (\$6,060) to their budget to cover legal fees. This is due to the developments that have come about with some of the other towns wanting more information. There has been talk of an RFP that may be put out by those towns for ambulance service. It was heard that the new administrator in Blandford volunteered to spearhead talks between the 6 towns. John B. said as far as he knows, and Barbara agreed, that Chester has no complaints. Pat will try to contact the new administrator. Rene mentioned that Hinsdale was going through somewhat the same thing, and they could not find fault with Hilltown. Mary Ann hoped Middlefield was on board as well.

2. John Murray: Highway.

John gave overview of past week. Mowing on Bromley and ERR, as well as culvert work almost done. Have been working on Town Hall drainage project. Filling potholes again. Looked at job descriptions which seem fine. Rene invited John up to Hinsdale to look at their work being finished to get an idea of what our work should look like. Our work is still scheduled for about mid October. Suggestion John speak with Huck and Jaimy for more firm dates. Barb asked about patching on Bromley Rd, there is a pile of blacktop near her driveway that is a hazard, can they look at it? Also working on swales on Skyline. Have about another 200' to go. John M. suggested we purchase a sander for the 350, lighter than what we have, so as not to be so hard on the truck. The existing sander is really too big for the truck. Board suggested he get a price for the next meeting.

Cell phone policy; Presented to board. Discussion on whether employees should carry a town issued cell, or be reimbursed for some of their personal bills, or carry two. Rene is not in favor of personal cell phones. Feels employees should not be on their phones during work hours. Barbara and John agree that in today's work world, many employees have cell phone plans that are covered somewhat by their employer. Pat will look into different towns to see what they offer as a cell phone policy.

Discussion of proposed 4th man in the highway department and the cost for that position. With salary and benefits the yearly cost is approximately \$57,450.00. (18.50 per hr). If the person were not to have the required licenses, we would start at 16.50 per hr until he possesses them. There would be a 6 month probationary period attached to the hiring. The discussion then turned to the proposed Admin. Asst. position to the Highway, Selectboard and Town Administrator. This is a 25 hr per week position. The yearly cost would be approximately \$41,720 per yr. Discussion held on how to present it to voters, should highway monies stay in

highway budget, with maybe an amount to offset (like water department) or should it become a stand alone position. Pat will work on it and present to the Board at another meeting.

Board of Health: Pat to ask BOH to come in to speak to the BOS regarding the expectations and the duties required of the board. Pat will arrange a time, since the next regular meeting night for the other departments is a Holiday.

Discussion as to how to finance the items for the STM. There is a chance we might have free cash certified. If not we can either raise and appropriate or transfer from stabilization fund. The Board did not want to do either, so we will make the vote contingent upon getting free cash certified.

Town Administrator

Pat asked if anyone knew if we actually had a leash law in effect. John B. thought we did. Check with Terry Donovan. He thought it was sometime 1970-1972.

Pat asked about the suggestion of putting gutters on town hall. After discussion, it was decided to wait out the winter, see if the water project will take care of it, then maybe look at them.

Pat announced that we had received a \$7,500 Green communities grant, although had not been formally notified as yet.

Pat asked if Trick or Treat would be held on 10/31? The board replied yes. John B. suggested the Selectmen donate some money to buy candy to have at the town hall that evening.

Citizens Comments

Ro McLaughlin:

Had a question regarding dogs in the town hall. Some people have allergies, etc. Do we have a policy? Barbara suggested there should be no dogs except for service dogs, in the town hall. After discussion Barbara made a motion that there should be no animals in town hall except for service animals.

Ro then asked about bushes and mailbox sticking out into the road on Prospect St. Can the town just cut the bushes if they are in the public way? Yes. We would have to check with the post office about the mail box.

Old State Road also has pine trees sticking out. Ed Meecham said he believes those belong to town of Huntington. John M. should call Chipper to ask about trimming. John mentioned the hours had changed at the highway department based upon last week's meeting. They now are working 6:00 am to 2:30 p.m. Discussion around starting times of Highway. The Selectboard felt 7:00 am to 3:30 p.m. should be the new times. John M. said he would change to those hours.

There was a report of another water leak. (As of 9/28 this was resolved).

Ed Meecham: Felt the highway was doing a good job on Skyline with the mowing. There is still more to be done. Also, asked if we had speed limit signs available at the Highway department.

John M. mentioned he thought there were. Ed mentioned cars traveling way too fast. John M. to ask CMELD if they have a radar light?

Tom Beck: Questioned line painting for passing zones near the solar farm. John M. will look into it.

John Murray then asked the board if the Highway Dept. hours could be changed again to 6:30 to 3:00 p.m. After more discussion, everyone agreed that this was an acceptable time.

Barbara just wanted to remind everyone that the Railway Station would be holding their yearly dinner in October.

John B. moved to adjourn at 7:48 p.m. Rene seconded. Unanimous.

Next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, October 3rd, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Carlino

Town Administrator

John Baldasaro, Chairman

Barbara Huntoon, Vice chairman

Rene Senecal, Clerk