

Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen
Minutes
December 5th, 2016

Chairman Baldasaro opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Minutes of 11/28/16 approved and signed. Warrants signed.

Highway Dept.

John Murray was not in attendance. Chapter 90 reimbursements were signed by Board for submission to Mass DOT. Rene Senecal addressed the board with some remarks regarding the Highway Department. He had received complaints from a couple of residents that some roads were treated and some were not, and that the residents had called the highway department but did not receive what they felt to be acceptable answers. As John M. was not in attendance this evening, we couldn't really get an answer. Rene took it upon himself to take a ride and see for himself. He would like to meet with John M. to discuss road strategies, treatments, etc. based upon his experience. His feeling is all residents should be treated the same, not pick and choose a road. Rosanne said that John M. had reported that they were headed out to sand about 1:30 or 2:00, but then she left for the day and didn't know what had transpired. John B. felt we needed a system, and would like to get the following information before the next meeting. What is John M. train of action, order of roads? Rene would like to know what his standards are, how he follows the weather? He also feels John M. should be calling back the residents to answer their concerns. Barbara felt that it might not be necessarily John M. who had to make the call backs, it could be Rosanne, as long as she had the proper information to report to them. Have a policy, which might have to change once in a while. We could place it on the website. Ron Ouimette noted that John M. was down at the transfer station as well today for a couple of hours helping with that project. Barbara asked about the condition of Round Hill Rd. John M. should look at it and see what kind of condition it is in. Rene asked the other two board members if it would be all right for him to get a hold of John M. and sit down with him to go over things. They agreed it would be a good idea. Rene asked about Complete Streets Program and the OSD procedures. Discussion held as to who should attend, etc.

The board went over the Highway Superintendent's Job Description. Other than a few edits that are needed, they felt it was sufficient. Pat will edit and submit next week. In addition, they looked at the employee evaluation form that was provided. They made a few edits to that also, and will review next week.

Water leak at Town Hall.

Mike Leach from DEP met with John M. on Friday. They determined where the shut off was, and that when the shut off was turned off, the leak stopped, so it definitely is not surface water. Various options were discussed with the outcome that it would probably be cheaper to put in a new line than to interfere with the handicapped accessible ramp. Pat will pursue estimates of the work, as well as contact PVPC about "program income" money.

John McVeigh: John did not the meeting, but Barbara relayed the information about a piece of equipment that he felt could be ripe for sharing services amongst the town. Rene is aware of this and feels it would not be beneficial for the town given the man power that is needed to run it and the scheduling that would be needed. It is more practical for a small company.

Town Clerk's Expenses

Discussion was held concerning the available monies in her expense accounts when supplies were ordered, as well as before the town meeting. While the board understands that she can apply her warrants to any of the expense lines, they do not like to see the deficit in one line item. Pat explained that the warrant could have been split up between the other expense lines, so that no deficit appeared, but that option was not proposed. After the discussion John B. stated that it had been a long time since we had held a financial team meeting, and maybe we should schedule one for after the 1st of the year. The team consists of Pat, the Accountant, the Treasurer and the Tax Collector. Pat will set it up. There have been many changes in the last few years, both employees and procedures, and we should all be aware and on the same page.

A question was asked about employees signing individual time sheets. Is it done. Pat reported she had checked with other Treasurers as well as town Counsel, and was told no. John B. stated he thought the reason for that was that Chester had a policy within its Personnel Handbook that addressed this. After looking, it was discovered he was right. Apparently no one could answer the question beforehand as to why this was being required. Also, the updating of the Handbook is old and of date and is a goal to be worked on as soon as time permits.

Town Administrator: Pat advised the board that she would like to take the days of Jan. 17th and 18th off.

Citizens Comments:

Ed Meecham questioned the advertisement for winter help. Confusion as to how many the Highway Dept. was looking for.

Tom Beck asked about signs when the men were mowing. Felt it's dangerous for them and traffic to not have signs.

Ron Ouimette Reported that Transfer Station is coming along. Should be done by Thursday the 8th weather permitting. He also asked if the board had decided on a new voting procedure for the future. Should be use cards, stand, or move to other sides of the room? The Board discussed the use of cards, as they used to have them, and felt they worked fine. Will talk to the town clerk about it to have her make recommendations also.

More road discussion took place, regarding which roads were worst. Rosanne provided information from the Paser Management report.

Tom Beck asked if the Railroad paid taxes. Pat will check but John B. felt they did not. Tom wondered why, as they use our services.

Cheryl Provost came in at this point to say she was having phone issues. Rosanne offered help her.

Barbara announced that this Sunday was the Chester Railroad Christmas party from 1-4 , with Santa coming at 2

John B. moved to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Barbara 2nd. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Carlino, Town Administator

John Baldasaro, Chairman

Barbara Huntoon, Vice Chairman

Rene Senecal, Clerk