

Town of Chester
Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioner/Zoning Board of Appeals
Meeting Minutes February 27, 2017

Chairman Baldasaro called meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Mike Donovan from Country Journal noted that he would be recording meeting on voice recorder. Minutes of February 13, 2017 meeting were moved and approved. Warrants were signed.

Highway Department review and discussion of winter expenses and plow routes. H.D. to get repair estimate for snow blower vs. purchase of new equipment. H.D. was instructed to review condition of Johnson Hill due to complaints by residents, "No Overnight Commercial Parking" sign at sand box located on Rte. 20., and to repair berm and driveway edge at Town Hall.

Herbology Group – Vice-Chairman Huntoon recused herself from participation and discussion regarding medical marijuana proposal to alleviate any possible conflict of interest due to her relationship with primary property owner of proposed site, and left the room prior to discussion of topic. Mr. Donovan from The Country Journal re-stated his recording of meeting. Chairman Baldasaro noted that Herbology Group is in initial stages of application process, and are requesting letter of non-opposition to file with Commonwealth by deadline of March 1, 2017. Herbology Group principals are veterans and women, committed to medical benefits of marijuana especially related to PTSD. They would like to bring this industry to the Hilltowns and are committed to using local resources for employment base, expected job creation of 11 full time and 18 part time employees. They anticipate use of existing buildings on Baystate Drive and building a 5000 sf greenhouse on the site. Their plan provides for a growth, packaging and distribution center, and small medical dispensary complying with all applicable visibility and odor control laws. It was negotiated that they would not seek to dispense recreational marijuana in the future and agreed to provide memorandum of understanding to declare agreement. Income to the town would be \$20,000 first year, \$40,000 second year, \$80,000 third year then 2% of gross revenue for years 4 and 5 with renegotiation at the end of year 5 and no tax exemptions. Herbology Group anticipates seed planting in spring 2018. Chairman Baldasaro motioned to approve issuance of letter of non-opposition, Clerk Senecal second, motion passed. Attorney Tom Mullen to draft letter. Chairman Baldasaro motioned to appoint Town Administrator Patricia Carlino as signatory on behalf of the board for letter of non-opposition due to time constraints, on condition that the memorandum of understanding is received and approved prior to such issuance, Clerk Senecal seconded, motion passed.

Vice-Chairperson Huntoon returned to meeting.

Town Administrator, signatures required for PVPC Community Development Block Grant. Chester On Track scheduled for May 20, 2017. Town Clerk request for special article for Annual Town Meeting for request \$2000.00 for Records Preservation program.

Clerk Senecal noted that MPO meeting rescheduled for March 28, 2017, inquired if town representative is still required to be a member of the board of selectman as Richard Holzman has offered to fill the position.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted that with BOS meeting held weekly, the Town Administrator and Admin Asst to determine their own schedule for who will attend.

Citizen Comments: Mr. Beck – nothing, Mr. Hickson – nothing Mr. Watters – nothing.

Mr. Huntoon wanted to thank the board for their consideration of the proposal for development of Baystate Drive. Mr. Myers will present budget recommendation by the Finance Committee at March 13, 2017 BOS meeting. Noted that Gateway School budget hearing is 3/1/2017, noted also that school enrollment is down approximately 50 students again this year. Gateway student enrollment under 800 now, Superintendent Hobson contract renewed for 3 more years. Next Hilltown Collaborative meeting Thursday March 2, 2017 at 6:00 pm at the Haley House (next to Town Hall).

Chairman Baldasaro motioned to adjourn 7:32 pm, Vice-Chairman Huntoon second.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosanne McClafin Recording Secretary

John Baldasaro – Chairman

Barbara Huntoon – Vice-Chairman

Rene Senecal - Clerk