

Town of Chester

Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioner/Zoning Board of Appeals

DRAFT -Meeting Minutes March 20,2017

Chairman Baldasaro called meeting called to order 6:00 p.m. Mike Donovan recording for Country Journal. Warrants signed. Minutes of 3/13/2017 to be discussed.

Town Administrator: PVPC Community Compact agreement for Shared Economic Development Officer submitted for approval, Chairman Baldasaro noted verbiage to be clarified to note "All compensation to be funded by Community Compact grant" and corrected first day of agreement to April 1, 2017. PVPC IT grant application submitted and approved.

Chairman Baldasaro opened floor to John Murray. Superintendent Murray questioned why his job had been posted in classified ads on 3/15/2017 after no discussion had been made in his presence during 3/13/2017 meeting, he is concerned regarding his job security. Chairman Baldasaro noted that the advertisements were to gather information, there was no "hire date" in the ads"- the expectations related to Murray's position were clarified in last week's meeting and that Murray's job is "John's (Murray) to own, but it is the responsibility of the BOS to be prepared in any event. Vice-Chairman Huntoon reported that she has spoken with Superintendent Murray and explained it was "bad timing" regarding the ad posting but the BOS wanted to "test the water", and reassured that there was no discussion to "fire" Murray. Clerk Senecal noted that the BOS is here for "every resident and every employee" and with so many changes it is important for John (Murray) "grab the bull by the horns" in every facet of the position. Also, with additional criteria for a DPW superintendent taken into consideration the BOS must be prepared with contingencies if personnel are lost. Chairman Baldasaro stated the BOS had removed the requirement for Murray to be present at all BOS meetings, felt it was counter-productive, but the Town needs a "pool" in the event shared services in the long range economic development include DPW coordinator. He (Baldasaro) also noted that Superintendent Murray needs to focus on the information that was discussed regarding the boards' expectations from him. Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted "we do not want you to fail, but it's up to you". Resident Carolyn Ouimette questioned what were the specific complaints related to Murrays performance? Clerk Senecal noted the issue was not complaints, concerns were more related to efficiency and planning. Vice-Chairman Huntoon would like Murray to be more pro-active vs. reactive. Chairman Baldasaro opened the floor for comments. Carolyn Ouimette remarked that she felt Superintendent Murray has done a great job, and has not had to call state police (for issues related to road safety). Clerk Senecal noted the BOS doesn't want Murray wasting time relating stuff to the BOS they don't need to know, but information related to large road projects need to be provided. Chairman Baldasaro reiterated that was why they (BOS) revamped process and will not require Murray to be present at all meetings. Carl Baldasaro interjected the need for open and accurate communication, we all need to work together for the benefit of the town. Additional discussion and review of topic. Vice-Chairman Huntoon noted that the BOS approved three-year appointment for Murray- which had not been the towns practice, and that evidenced their (BOS) confidence in him (Murray), no one wants to hire a new person, things had been repeatedly discussed did not want to rehash further. Additional discussion of need for 1,3 and 5 years' plans, to be "game plan" not a blue print, changes to be expected but set goals and objectives. Question posed regarding town snow blower repair expense, quoted at \$1200.00, new machine quoted at \$1300.00 to be reviewed later. Additional discussion regarding Community Compact shared services. Ron Ouimette brought up the Prospect St retaining wall, would like to be present when engineer does evaluation, requirement if Chapter 90 funds used contractor must be prequalified with the state.

COA – Sue Kucharski – see attached report – discussion regarding "trailer" for Police Dept., improbable due to communication, security, access issues and legal criteria for remote location. Additional discussion of options, Town Hall auditorium, Train Station and basement expansion. Auditorium and basement issues related to Theater use, Clerk Senecal noted that the Town's needs should supersede Theater needs. Theater is on agenda for 3/27/2017 meeting, topic to be discussed further at that time. COA Director Kucharski to attend Foundation meeting 3/21/2017 for further exploration of Train Station option. Additional discussion of reconfiguration of basement to allow expansion or movement of offices to allow space. Chairman Baldasaro would like Sue to "change hats" wanted to know if she- as Town Clerk, has sufficient funds for elections, she stated yes but money will be tight. Vice-Chairman Huntoon questioned what expenses were related to the election. Town Clerk Kucharski noted, constables, warden, poll workers, as well as ballots and supplies. She (Kucharski) also noted the possibility of eliminating the Town Caucus which would

result in savings to the Town. She would like to request a warrant item for the Annual Town Meeting to proceed with process to eliminate the caucus. Also, to eliminate the requirement for voter registration access on Saturday in effort to additionally reduce cost associated for elections to the Town. The Town must adopt a law/by-law as adopting a policy for voter registration move to weekday vs. weekend. Town Clerk Kucharski to prepare warrant and be on Annual Town Meeting agenda accordingly.

BOS review of account balances. Town Administrator to review possible posting errors resulting in report showing deficit spending.

Clerk Senecal asked about uploading audio transcript of minutes. Noted that files must be "zipped" to condense data usage, R. McClafin to research.

Town Administrator Carlino reported job posting are only on Craig's List to date, expense to post in paper or other electronic sources range from \$200 - \$300 per ad. Chairman Baldasaro mentioned MASSJOBS as an option, large percentage of state and municipal postings in this venue.

Chairman Baldasaro noted minutes cannot be released until approved by the board, Town Administrator Carlino stated minutes may be released but MUST be clearly marked as "DRAFT", Clerk Senecal remarked all records now must be requested through RAO (Records Access Officer) per new MA law. Clarification of 3/13/2017 minutes to reflect BOS discussion and Chairman Baldasaro comments regarding job postings.

Chairman Baldasaro noted employee performance review of highway department employees submitted by Superintendent Murray should be held in executive session.

Clerk Senecal noted duplications in estimate provided for snow blower repair, asked for additional information. Vice-Chairman Huntoon questioned age of equipment, if preferable to purchase new. McClafin suggested additional estimates to be requested from local repairmen.

Town Administrator Carlino noted that all documents have been provided to MA DOR for verification of "FREE CASH".

No citizen comments

Chairman Baldasaro motioned to adjourn 7:55 p.m., Vice-Chairman Huntoon second, unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

R. McClafin Recording Secretary

John Baldasaro – Chairman

Barbara Huntoon – Vice-Chairman

Rene Senecal -Clerk

