

**Town of Chester**

**Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes**

**January 21, 2015**

**6:00 p.m.**

1. Chairman Baldasaro opened the meeting, at 6:00 p.m., the purpose being to hold interviews for the new highway superintendent.

6:00 p.m. Steve Cooper

Steve is currently a member of the highway department who holds all of the qualifying licenses as the job description called for. He has worked for the town since 2011.

Don Ellershaw and John Baldasaro asked a number of questions of Steve (Frank Pero not in attendance) as stated below:

Why do you want the job? Steve responded that he would like the job, just not under the present way it's set up, with yearly appointment. At that time John and Don started conversation regarding changing the appointment process. After discussion, it was decided to move on with the interview and discuss this another day.

Steve said his immediate focus would be on the three projects in the pipeline for Chpt. 90, hiring a new person for the highway department, and of course managing the winter.

He has taken a Mass Rural Water class, but decided not to pursue further at the time. He can manage, but is not very confident in the new excavator, but will continue to play around with it. He is proficient in all other equipment we have. Ideas for Johnson Hill Rd.? Roll it or pack with the grader. Need to address it now, before paving. Which dirt roads are the worst. Depends on time of year. Can do minor repairs on equipment, including some welding. Has a concern about Mach truck, and plans for it. Would need to get familiar with the budget.

6:30 p.m. John Murray

John currently owns his own business out of Becket. Puts in septic systems, plows, small Construction jobs, landscaping, & drainage. Has plowed for Mass Highway in the past. Was Selectman in Becket, understands the budget process, Chapter 90. Can operate all machinery, including excavator. Priority? Get to know the men, get to know the roads, check machinery for maintenance issues. Can do some small welding. Discussed how a road should be done, grading, crown in middle of road, get water to run correctly. Johnson Hill: Use dense grade stone, pack it down, on steep, curvy part. Dirt roads: Use crushed stone, How would you use the excavator in Chester. Could add a brush hog. How would you act to Selectmen telling you what to do? He would explain why he didn't agree. Living in Becket, how will he know what is

going on in Chester. He only lives 6 miles away, and would come as often as needed to check things out. Does know some of our roads already. Will work with present crew to maintain their confidence. He doesn't like conflict.

Discussion followed the interviews of both candidates. Both Don and John felt that Steve was capable, but that John had more management experience, as well as machinery experience with the excavator, although Steve had more with the grader than John. Both Selectmen felt that John has a little more of an edge with both experience and machinery. John moved to offer the position to John Murray at an hourly rate of \$22.21, until June 30<sup>th</sup>, at which time it will become a yearly appointment. Don 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous. John asked that Pat tell Steve to hang in there for future opportunities.

Don moved to adjourn at 7:17 p.m. John 2<sup>nd</sup> Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patricia D. Carlino  
Town Administrator

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John Baldasaro, Chairman

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Donald Ellershaw, Vice Chairman

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Frank Pero, Jr., Clerk.