

TOWN OF CHESTER

Board of Selectmen/Water Commissioners/Zoning Board of Appeals

Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2018

Attendance: BOS-Chairman John Baldasaro, Vice-Chairman Barbara Huntoon, Clerk Rene Senecal, Administrative Assistant Rosanne McClaflin, Highway Superintendent John Murray, Mary Ann Pease, Gene Watters, Bob Daly, John Foley, Wilma Foley, Arthur Lindburg, Steve Cooper, Ernie Foster, Michael Foster, James Toomey (Palmer Paving), Bryan Farr, Jeanne Leclair, Anne Wellington, Erin Patrick, Peter Spotts (Country Journal)

- I. Chairman Baldasaro called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on March 19, 2018**
- II. Minutes from last meeting date 3/12/2018 were not approved-corrections to be made to the minutes and resubmitted at the next BOS meeting on 3/26/2018.**
- III. Warrants were approved and signed.**
- IV. Ernie Foster / NEFF Route 20 property-public access.** Bob Daley introduced Ernie Foster and Michael Foster. Chairman Baldasaro expressed appreciation for their attendance, referenced meeting held in November with NEFF attorney Ray Lyons, Board of Assessors and Board of Selectmen to discuss resolution of long standing public access and tax issues and asked Mr. Foster if he had any thoughts or suggestions for solution. Mr. Foster stated that he was not party to that meeting, did not have thoughts on the issues, and that he thought the Town would offer a proposal. Chairman Baldasaro explained that NEFF filed an appeal with the appellate tax board, but the Board of Selectmen would like to avoid an appellate hearing and have the BOS, BOA, and NEFF find a better way to settle the issues as “good neighbors”. Michael Foster noted that while Ernie Foster does hold a seat on the NEFF Board of Directors, “they” (Ernie Foster and himself) “are not NEFF and do not know what NEFF’s plans are”. Baldasaro offered that during the November meeting, Mr. Lyons had relayed information about a new composite product from NEFF that might be considered for use to build a foot bridge which be used as a “showcase” for the product, and that Attorney Lyons suggested the Board speak with Ernie as he is on the NEFF Board of Directors and could relay information to the NEFF Board. Discussion followed regarding the suggestion made during November 2017 meeting of a cantilevered foot bridge attached to the existing bridge to allow easier public access. Mr. Foster stated he was not familiar with that suggestion and additional discussion followed regarding cost, liability, maintenance, insurance and control of access by dirt bikes, four-wheelers etc. Mr. Foster noted that he would contact “the right people” and discuss the topic at next NEFF Board meeting in June. The Board asserted that since the original transfer of the property, it was agreed the land would remain accessible for passive recreation and that to date no access is readily available. Mr. Foster stated that he has always tried to accommodate reasonable requests for access including any made by handicapped persons. Foster also suggested the access via Old State Road, Emery Street and Sylvester Hamilton Road, but was advised that those access points must be reached by crossing other private properties and is, therefore restricted. Clerk

Senecal pointed out that people were supposed to “have the right to access” the public land -not “access by permission”. Chairman Baldasaro noted that with the current economic development efforts Chester is pursuing, the Town may be able to apply for grants to offset cost to build access bridge. Mr. Foster expressed willingness to discuss with the NEFF Board the options discussed and noted that if there is a particular event or reason to access property to contact them (Mr.Foster) and they will accommodate.

V. Highway Department -John Murray/Guest-James Toomey from Palmer Paving. (Chris Galipeau from Nutmeg International not attending) Murray relayed that the International was now “running good” and Chairman Baldasaro questioned number of hours the truck had been in use, Murray indicated the truck had only been back in service for approximately 40 hours, but time would tell how well repairs hold up. Murray noted that “the guys did a great job” while he was out (sick). He introduced James Toomey to talk about Johnson Hill Road and East River Road. Mr. Toomey relayed that Palmer Paving had come two weeks ago to sweep and crack seal all of Johnson Hill Road. They (Palmer Paving) had done the paving on the middle portion last year which already showed some cracking. Toomey indicated that the location of the cracks was not typical and that based on location of the cracking, frost and water crossing under the road were the probable cause. Murray noted that the service of crack sealing 4,700 linear feet was performed free of charge by Palmer Paving. Mr. Toomey also explained that Chester is included in the fiscal 2017 Hampshire Counsel of Government / Cooperative Purchasing bid pricing, and that the Town can utilize that contract and pricing for asphalt until June 30, 2018. Discussion followed regarding Town’s option to use county bid pricing or put new contracts “out to bid”. Additional discussion followed regarding options as related to MassWORKS grant and East River Road project as well as the development of contract and bid specifications for the East River Road project.

VI. Erin Rogers-Trout Unlimited: Trout Unlimited is currently working with grants from MA Department of Environmental Resources (DER) and Mass Fish & Wildlife for replacement of two culverts on Kinnebrook Road. Full funding is in place for the design, engineering, permitting and construction of a replacement culvert on Skunk Brook. Erin Rogers to work with John Murray and Rosanne McClafin to pursue additional funding though this year’s MassDER Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Program grant for second culvert replacement.

VII. Tax Collector-Mary Ann Pease: tax title survey-Old State Road. Pease suggested adding the “unknown” parcel adjacent to the Town owned parcel which holds the cell tower, surveying the property to “cut out” the portion the tower is located on, and selling the remaining lot at auction. Chairman Baldasaro stated that the tower company should have a survey that Pease should be able to obtain and that additional funds for surveying should not be required. Pease to proceed.

**** Bryan Farr-**Mr. Farr indicated that the Visitor Center (which was jointly located with The Village Enterprise Center at 26 Main Street) now needs a new location to operate from. Discussion followed regarding suggestions and options for a new location for the Visitor Center, including placement of a temporary trailer or small shed at the “pull off” near the Walker Brook/Hampden Street/Route 20 intersection or possible development of “Carm’s”. Economic Development Director Jeanne Leclair expressed commitment for the location of the visitor center to remain in Chester. Mr. Farr suggested senior work-off program to provide staffing for center (once location found) and advised the Board that he is also

working with the Chester Historical Society on a “walking history map”. The Board expressed their support and appreciation to Mr. Farr and Ms. Leclair in their efforts.

Other Business:

Clerk Senecal informed the Board that he had received calls from resident veterans regarding the Korean flag located in the Town Hall auditorium. He noted that other flags should not be displayed at the same level as the American flag. Admin. Asst. McClafin to address.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon shared that a complaint had been made to her, reporting that a member of the Board of Health had been acting “unprofessionally”. Huntoon questioned the Board’s authority in connection to the complaints. Clerk Senecal stated the Board must act accordingly and Chairman Baldasaro noted the options would be to make note of complaints or address in executive session. He also asked if Huntoon could be more specific. Huntoon noted that she had received complaints regarding BOH Chairperson Norma McDonald. Chairman Baldasaro directed Admin. Asst. to add Executive Session to agenda for March 26 and to notify Ms. McDonald accordingly.

Vice-Chairman Huntoon also instructed Admin. Asst. McClafin to research and resolve questions made to her regarding payment to Hometown Structures for the new shed to be placed at the Transfer Station and check request submitted by the Historical Society for building repairs. She also expressed frustration in resolution of Recreation Committee request for payment for materials for “work party” scheduled for March 24 and 25 at the Emery Street ballfield. Discussion followed to “tighten-up” these processes.

Citizen Comments:

Bob Daley questioned if a date for the audit had been set; Chairman Baldasaro stated no, but it is on their radar and believes we are waiting for the auditors to set a date. Daley also asked if confirmation of number of “16 new students” had been made and Mary Ann Pease stated, that yes, the number is accurate. Chairman Baldasaro noted that Russell had lost 16 students from their census.

John Foley questioned if notification of “pass at own risk/no liability” sign on Mr. Foster’s bridge would be sufficient to allow foot traffic. Vice-Chairman Huntoon feels it would not be sufficient or meet criteria to eliminate risk. Chairman Baldasaro feels it would not be difficult to have an insurance rider put in place. Mr. Foley also noted that the use of acronyms in connection to highway discussion can be confusing and clarification would aid in the transfer of information.

Mary Ann Pease stated the repairmen have finished replacing the floor in the basement and that they would be here Tuesday to put “stuff back”. She went on to state there there is still a musty odor in the vault and asked to have additional confirmation that no additional mold exists. Admin. Asst. McClafin to ask Building Inspector for inspection.

- I. Clerk Senecal reviewed proposed bid package and contract for East River Road project and feels some additional changes are needed, McClafin to address. McClafin to also recalculate project using county bid pricing. The consensus between the BOS and Highway Department is for the bid package to be

fine-tuned and brought before the Board at the next selectmen's meeting for a final look-over before sending out to bid. All agreed time is of the essence.

VIII.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Baldasaro motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m., Vice-Chairman Huntoon: seconded, unanimous.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING 3/26/2018 6:00 P.M.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Rosanne McClaflin

John Baldasaro – Chairman

Barbara Huntoon – Vice-Chairman

Rene Senecal - Clerk